THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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20 INDIAN-AMERICANS IN BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

US President-elect Joe Biden has nominated at least 20 Indian-Americans, including 13 women, to key positions

A RECORD FOR THE SMALL COMMUNITY

For the first time ever, so many Indian-Americans, who make up 1% of the US' population, have been roped into a presidential administration before the inauguration. Kamala Harris is the first Indian-origin and African-American to be sworn in as the Vice-President. As many as 17 of the nominated 20, are part of the administration in the White House complex

FACES FROM KARNATAKA

- Dr Vivek Murthy, who will be the US Surgeon General, and Mala Adiga, who has been appointed as the Policy Director to the future First Lady Dr Jill Biden, are from the state
- For the first time, 2 individuals with roots in Kashmir, and 3 of Pakistani, Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi origin, are nominated | P9

Jan 20

BIDEN'S INAUGURATION AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Where's Kannada? Oppn tears into Govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE debate over imposition of Hindi in Karnataka flared up once again on Sunday, after Kannada activists and Opposition leaders took exception to the State Government leaving out Kannada inscription on the foundation stone plaque of the RAF unit.

The event was inaugurated by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Bhadravathi on Saturday and the plaque, as well as the banner, only had English and Hindi transcriptions. A host of opposition leaders, including former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy, accused the State Government and Shah of insulting Kannada and Kannadigas.

Kannada organisations and activists took to social media platforms to lash out at the government and campaign against the imposition of Hindi language on non-Hindi speaking states with the hashtag #NoToHindiSlavery. P5

MOMENT OF PRIDE

An Indian Navy contingent rehearses for the upcoming Republic Day Parade, at Rajpath in New Delhi on Sunday | PTI

Won't give an inch of land to M'rashtra: Kannada activists' retort to Thackeray

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

KANNADA activists and Water Resources Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi slammed Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's remarks on Sunday on "incorporating Marathi-speaking areas" in Karnataka into Maharashtra.

Jarkiholi said Maharashtra is trying to create unnecessary confusion over the issue. "Belagavi is an integral part of Karnataka. The Mahajan Commission report has already been accepted and there is no question of giving even an inch of land." He accused the Maharashtra government of raising the issue to cover up its failures. Rajya Sabha member from BJP Iranna Kadadi termed Thackeray's statement "foolish", saying, "Politicians in Maharashtra are trying to gain political mileage out of a closed chapter. Marathi people born in this part of Karnataka are living happily for so many years. A pro-Maharashtra outfit like Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) which once had about six to seven MLAs in Belagavi region now has none."

Well-known Kannada leader from Belagavi Ashok Chandargi said, "The Maharashtra government has already filed a case before the Supreme Court over the boundary row. Any statement on the dispute amounts to contempt of court. If Thackeray is not worried about the case in the court, he should withdraw it and launch his fight outside the court." P4

EXPRESS READ

Johnson invites Modi to UK for G7 summit

London: UK PM Boris Johnson has invited PM Narendra Modi for the G7 summit as he confirmed details on Sunday for the high-level meeting to be presided over by Britain in the coastal region of Cornwall between June 11 and 13. P7

EPFO settles 56.79L Covid advance claims

New Delhi: Retirement fund body EPFO has settled 56.79 lakh Covid-19 non-refundable advance claims, and has disbursed Rs 14,310 crore till December 31, 2020, reflecting the impact of the pandemic on the formal sector workforce.

'Shiv Sena will contest Assembly polls in WB'

Mumbai: The Shiv Sena will contest the upcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal, party MP Sanjay Raut said on Sunday. He said the decision has been taken after discussions with Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray. P8

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex YOUR LIFE COACH
32 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF edex (TABLOID), 4 OF CITY EXPRESS

First committee meet tomorrow

Supreme Court expected to hear petition filed by the BKU Lokshakti union today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

A controversial committee appointed by the Supreme Court last week to hear arguments on the three contentious farm laws to resolve the ongoing agitation of farmers, will hold its first meeting on Tuesday, its member Anil Ghanwat said on Sunday.

While one of its members, Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) president Bhupinder Singh Mann recused himself from the committee, the other three, including Ashok Gulati and Pramod Kumar Joshi, will hold an internal meeting on Tuesday and begin hearing all stakeholders from Thursday.

The next round of talks between the Centre and the farmers, too, is slated for Tuesday.

On Monday, the Supreme Court is expected to hear a petition filed by the BKU Lokshakti union seeking disbanding of the present committee and putting in place a new one in the interest of harmony and natural justice, as its current members are known supporters of the farm sector reform laws. The bench could also look into the possibility of appointing a replacement for Mann who recused himself from the panel.

Another point of friction is the proposed Kisan Tractor Parade by farmers on Republic Day. The bench will hear a plea by the Delhi Police seeking an injunction against the tractor march or any other kind of protest by farmers that could disrupt Republic Day celebrations on January 26.

A farmer raises slogans during a protest against the new farm laws, in New Delhi on Sunday | PTI

For their part, farmers announced that the Kisan Tractor Parade would be on the Outer R ing Road in Delhi covering about 47 km. Every vehicle will fly a Tricolour and the flag of the respective farmer union, they said after a meeting of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha in at the Singhu border in Delhi. P7

On Day Two, 58% of people take jab at private hospitals

2 suffer adverse reaction

Two cases of Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI), where patients developed stomach ache, were reported on the second day of vaccination in Udupi on Sunday

This could mostly be due to apprehension, anxiety and nothing to do with the vaccine. Both the patients who reported AEFI are doing fine

Dr Sudhirchandra Sooda, DHO, Udupi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A day after the grand launch of the vaccination drive across the country on Saturday, Karnataka on the second day saw 58 per cent of healthcare and frontline workers coming forward to take the jab. The Day 2 was held at only 64 session sites located at private hospitals in Bengaluru and Udupi districts.

The numbers though still less, the State Health Ministry attributed the muted response to it being a Sunday and also to some people still being apprehensive of the vaccine.

To increase the number of people getting vaccinated, the government has decided to resume vaccination at more centres from Monday. "A lot more facilities have joined the programme. The sites will be increased at private hospitals at all districts," said Medical Education and Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar, while speaking at Manipal Hosptial on Old Airport Road in Bengaluru, where 4,055 beneficiaries had registered at 41 sites in the hospital.

CONTINUED ON: P3

HIGH RESISTANCE

Shardul, Washington: Tail of 2 cities

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

THE Gabbatoir holds a unique place in Australia's intimidating sporting theatre. It's where visiting cricketing teams come to get thrashed. India seemed to go down this most established of Australian practices when they were reduced to 186/6 on Sunday. Worse still, they had Shardul Thakur, in his second Test, and Washington Sundar, a debutant, in the middle.

The story took a turn. It was a day of the two greenhorns — Chennai-bred Washington and a small-town man Thakur, who honed his talent in Mumbai. Their 123-run partnership was enriched by cuts, hooks and textbook drives. What made it even more special was the fact these two were meant to be add-ons, two reserve players supposed to do their thing in nets.

Like many of his peers and heroes of Mumbai, Thakur's cricketing journey began on Mumbai locals. From Palghar to Borivali and back, his day would begin before sunrise and end long after sunset. His coach Dinesh Lad remembers him not for his performance, but for his attitude. "When you are forced to earn everything in life, you don't throw away anything," Lad said.

Like Thakur, Washington too was not supposed to be there. In Chennai circles, he is labelled as a T20 specialist, who can be useful in 50 overs. What is not known is that he had opened for Under-19 India. A shy person, he prefers to remain alone, confined to his room. On tours, his *Instagram* stories are mostly of him taking solo walks. On Sunday, however, he did not walk alone. He and Thakur took India to respectability. P11

(Inputs from Venkata Krishna B)

Centre's aim is to double farmers' income with new laws, says Shah

MAHESH M GOUDAR @ Bagalkot

THE top priority of PM Narendra Modi's government is to double the income of farmers with the implementation of three new farm laws, said Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on Sunday.

Though farmers have been protesting for nearly two months now, Shah asserted that the Centre will not repeal the laws. "We have repeatedly asked the agitators to point out flaws in the farm laws, if any, so that they could be set right. But the protesters close their ears, refusing to listen to anything... The only thing they want is the repeal of farm laws," said Shah. P4

BE SAFE

Vaccines are here, but don't throw away masks

KARTHIK K K @ Mysuru

It seems that the arrival of vaccines has made people think it is the end of the coronavirus battle. In Mysuru, you can see people roaming without wearing face masks or maintaining social distancing.

As Covid-19 vaccines rolled out across the country on Saturday, people who had adhered to all the protocols till recently, seem to have forgotten that they are still in the middle of a pandemic.

From Devaraja Market to Central Business District to a public and private event, people over the last two days were found throwing the Covid norms into the air.

On Sunday too, in most of the events held across the city, people participated without masks. At one event where Congress leader Siddaramaiah was present, when people crowded on the stage, he requested them to get down and maintain social distance. P5

Participants seen attending an event without wearing masks in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYSHANKAR S

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21 | 15
25 | 16
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• Maximum Basic Sum Assured: No Upper limit
• Minimum Entry Age: 8 years
• Maximum Entry Age: 50/54/59 years for policy term 25/21/16 years
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THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
• Monday: 18/01/2021 • Year: Sarvari • Ayana: Uttharayana
• Ritu: Himantha • Masa: Pausha • Paksha: Sukla • Tithi: Panchami 9:52 am
• Nakshatra: Purva Bhadra 8:44 am • Moon in Mesha Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 14°C | MAX 28°C
FORECAST
Morning clouds

Sunrise 6.46 am
Sunset 6.14 pm
Moonrise 10.37 am
Moonset 10.50 pm

02 BENGALURU MONDAY 18.01.2021 newindianexpress.com

‘Nandini on Wheels’ mini-trucks will bring milk to your doorsteps

The pilot service will start in Yelahanka zone

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

IN this age of home delivery — when anything from televisions, furniture, vegetables to cigarettes is dropped home — the milkman is not the only one to bring milk sachets to your doorstep.

Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) has partnered with Mother Dairy to start ‘Nandini on Wheels’ service, with mini-trucks with milk products moving around, saving the citizen a walk to the milk booth. The pilot service will start in Yelahanka zone from Monday.

The signature blue-and-white vehicles will move around from 9am to 8pm, carrying sufficient stock. The vehicles also have a tie-up with the nearest parlour to get refills of stock as and when required.

Though eight such mini-trucks are already moving around the city and state, they have been introduced by individual milk unions like Mandya, Bangalore Dairy, Mangaluru and others. Based on the success of the Yelahanka service, more mini-trucks will be introduced in other parts of Bengaluru and Karnataka, a senior KMF official told *The New Indian Express*.

There is already one vehicle in each district, being run on a trial basis. Raju, marketing manager, Mother Dairy, Yelahanka zone, said that ‘Nandini on Wheels’ is being introduced since there aren’t many milk parlours in Bengaluru, especially in the new areas. Though the contract is for one year, it will initially be run for three months and based on feedback, the service will be extended for a year.

There are 122 milk parlours in Bengaluru, and the plan is to add more and introduce mobile vehicles so that people are better connected to local products. Another reason for introducing these vehicles is that in most of the parlours, vendors are stocking few Nandini products and selling other items.

The state government also plans to use these vehicles to supply other items, and based on the feedback, introduce similar vehicles to supply fruits and vegetables from Hopcoms.

No bird flu in state, says animal husbandry dept

Measures in place to detect, prevent outbreak, says state government

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

WITH Delhi and Maharashtra confirming cases of avian flu of sub-type H5N8 recently after its presence was confirmed in Kerala, the Karnataka government has put measures in place to detect and prevent an outbreak.

Officials from the animal husbandry department and Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) have been holding regular meetings and ensuring regular testing of faecal samples. So far, all samples have tested negative for avian flu.

Experts say that although the H5N8 sub-type of the bird flu virus (Influenza A virus) is considered to be less pathogenic for humans, its pathogenic potential has been found to have increased compared to the highly virulent H1N1 sub-type. (H1N1 and H5N8 are both sub-types of the Influenza A virus). Although low-risk for humans, it is lethal for birds and poultry.

However, officials of the health, animal husbandry departments and the BBMP have maintained that there is no need to worry and that chicken and eggs are safe for consumption.

Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department Secretary Rajendra Kumar Kataria told TNIE that all protocols and safety measures are being adhered to. “Samples of all dead birds are being taken for analysis and so far, all cases are negative for bird flu. There is no need for citizens to panic. In case of poultry farms, an alert has been issued and protocols are being followed. Officials are paying regular visits to check the status and health of birds. Since Karnataka is a producing state, special checks are being conducted,” he said.

The State government has imposed a ban on poultry and other products coming from Kerala to Karnataka, as cases are being reported in the neighbouring state.

“Although we do not procure poultry from Kerala, as a precautionary measure an alert has been sounded and ban imposed to ensure that their unsold items do not enter Karnataka’s markets,” an animal husbandry official said.

Health officials said the general public need not panic. “As long as people cook eggs and chicken well, they can eat it,” a health department official said.

BBMP officials said that a close watch was also being kept on chicken stalls selling live and processed meat to ensure that hygiene and standards are met, and there is no outbreak.

“Only those who work in poultry farms and touch dead birds or their droppings need to wear masks and gloves. They must wash hands with soap and water after handling them. So far, samples of dead birds sent from Mysuru and Chikkaballapur have tested negative and there are no cases of bird flu in Karnataka,” said Dr Bhanumurthy, Joint Director, Communicable Diseases, Health and Family Welfare department.

Meanwhile, ornithologists have assured that reports about dead birds being found around Puttenahalli Lake are fake.

Nearly 50 birds were recently found dead in Gadag | EXPRESS

Save trees: B’lureans’ protest takes root

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

WORRIED over the number of trees being axed for developmental works, citizens have now started raising their voice against officials in the community level to save them.

That is not all, officials are also altering their plans and redesigning roads in a way that only a few or no trees get axed. One such incident took place on Athashri Road in Whitefield, where the residents raised their voice and also launched a campaign on social media to save the trees and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) gave in to the demand. This saved 40 trees on a-one-and-half kilometre stretch.

“Many trees have already been axed for various developmental works and this road was also listed in the revised Master Plan 2015 as a 80-feet road, but nothing of this sort happened on ground. The BBMP had decided to cut down trees for road widening and drainage works. We raised our voice against it and launched a campaign on social media and the BBMP officials agreed to our demands. Now, the drains will flow naturally and a compromise has been made,” said Sandeep Anirudhan from Namma Whitefield Group.

A similar incident happened on HAL Road a few days ago, where the residents did not want the trees to be cut for road works. The BBMP forest cell, which received the application, discussed the matter with the engineers. After this, it was decided that only old and weak trees will be removed with citizens’ consent. Now, BBMP is also working on a similar application that it has received from residents around Sony World Junction. Citizens have asserted that trees should not be axed for footpath and road widening works. The BBMP is now taking a relook at the designs to ensure that demands of citizens are met.

BBMP Deputy Conservator of Forests, H S Ranganatha Swamy told *The New Indian Express* that it has been decided to involve people in such projects and hence decisions are being taken accordingly to ensure that there is minimal damage to green spaces. Based on the applications, an assessment is made to save as many trees as possible.

Another BBMP official said, “Ever since the court took note of the shrinking tree cover and many cases on trees being axed for road works came up, the BBMP decided to follow public opinion and tried to not cut trees as much as possible.”

2 HELD FOR CONNING CAR RENTAL FIRM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have arrested two men who had allegedly cheated a car rental firm by hiring cars and selling them to others. The police have recovered 27 cars from the accused.

The accused have been identified as Mohan and Girish Gowda. Police said the manager of a car rental firm had lodged a complaint with Byappanahalli police on December 30 against the duo. “In July 2020, Girish Gowda and Mohan visited our office and had taken a car on rent. On several occasions, they had taken 20 cars on rent. However, they did not return them and we learnt that the duo had sold the vehicles to others,” he said in the complaint.

The case was transferred to the CCB and the sleuths, who gathered information about the accused, nabbed Mohan and Gowda. “Based on their information, 27 cars have been recovered. Besides, cash and gold jewels, other articles have also been recovered from the accused,” the police added.

EXPRESS READ

Woman arrested for stealing bag at KIA

Bengaluru: The KIA police arrested a 23-year-old woman for allegedly stealing a bag belonging to another passenger, from the airport conveyor belt. The incident was reported on November 13 and the police traced the accused in Rajasthan. Based on the complaint, the police examined CCTV footage and identified the accused as Sakshi Rathod, a native of Jaipur. She came to Bengaluru to meet a friend, and while checking out at the airport, she picked up the bag and left. The bag contained gold jewellery and cash worth ₹2.5 lakh. **ENS**

Colombian woman held for skimming

Bengaluru: A Colombian woman was arrested by the Sampigehalli police for allegedly stealing ₹17.71 lakh from an ATM by installing a skimming device. She has been identified as Stefania Munoz Monsalve (23), a resident of KR Puram. Police said a complaint was filed on January 11 by a bank manager, who stated that a customer who came to withdraw cash had got ₹1 lakh from the cash deposit machine, though he had keyed in ₹1,500. He then alerted the manager. An internal inquiry found that Stefania had installed a skimming device, She was traced and arrested. **ENS**

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

18th January: There’s a stubborn feel around today’s celestial patterns. Just what we all do about it is up to us. It’s good to be faithful to your principles, but maybe not at the cost of confrontation. That’s always the big question - when to stick to your guns and when to be flexible. Alas, all we can do is follow our consciences.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
What a day! It’s very much a case of the irresistible force meeting the immovable object. Don’t feel badly if plans don’t work out. But don’t blame the stars, either - or other people for that matter. You see, if you tackle the details, you’ll win through.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Your nomadic tendencies are growing more insistent by the day, and Taureans who are taking time off this week are fortunate indeed. If you’re at home, you must find ways to spice up your existence. A new interest could take hold, but you do need to think big.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
If you’re a typical Gemini of the old school you’ll be in your element this week. There’ll be disagreements, debates and differences of opinion galore - and plenty of opportunities for you to get your spoke in. But listen to your dreams - they make more sense than the facts.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Your stars are entering another of those delightful alignments which encourage your hopes and stimulate your imagination. It’s all down to the Moon’s imminent and intriguing encounter with the Sun; it looks as if destiny is picking you out for special treatment.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
This week’s trends reinforce everything that was said about your chart last week. Your stars confirm that you are in an idealistic and selfless mood, though confusion is likely to creep in whenever the nebulous planet, Neptune, comes into play - and that’s about every other day.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
You are still in the driving seat, although you should begin to tie up all loose ends. I’d like to remind you that at work it’s who you know and not what you know that’s important. You should therefore get on and cultivate personal contacts, much as this may go against the Virgoan grain.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
The present is still slightly confused, but the future is coming fast - so get ready. Everything has to be faced with confidence. You really cannot bury your head in the sand any longer, and only Librans who act decisively, and with self-confidence, will come through intact and in control.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
It’s a time for lofty ideals and noble sentiments. Just don’t be so pompous and self-righteous that others are turned off! Leave financial initiatives until the middle to end of the week, for it seems that there may still be other circumstances to consider.

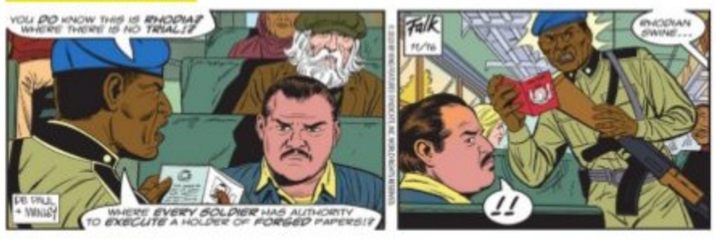
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
Once again money and financial security are the issues of the week. I hope I will encourage you by pointing out the truly stupendous prospects for gain and profit that await the canny among you. You’ll help your cause if you loosen up your thinking processes and consider new ideas - however unusual.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
One group of planets is attempting to knock you sideways while another struggles to hold you upright. It is not surprising that you feel buffeted by the winds of change. In fact, it is quite natural that you should. Your romantic mood is shifting, and over the next month you’ll need to feel more secure.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
There’s plenty of room for you to bring out your famous Aquarian radicalism this week and show people just what an anarchist you are. Yet, complex factors indicate that you’re more likely to be a secret revolutionary, prepared to consider sweeping changes in your lifestyle.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
You are in an extremely strong position. Your secret is your flexibility - and your astonishing ability to adjust to changing circumstances. You’ll alter one or two of your key ambitions and you’ll also be changing some of your deeply-entrenched attitudes.

THE PHANTOM


YOU DO KNOW THIS IS RHODNAT WHERE THERE IS NO TRIAL!?
WHERE EVERY SOLDIER HAS AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE A HOLDER OF FORGED PAPERS!?
RHODNAN SWINE...
!!

HI AND LOIS

BEETLE BAILEY

Z HUH?
WAKE UP, BEETLE. YOU WERE TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP
THANKS, I WAS HAVING A NIGHTMARE ABOUT SARGE BEATING ME UP
UNFORTUNATELY, SOME DREAMS DO COME TRUE

BLONDIE

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO UNCLOG THE BATHROOM SINK
I'VE ALREADY STARTED. I'M BUSY VISUALIZING MYSELF UNCLOGGING IT
CAN YOU VISUALIZE THIS, DEAR?
I SURE DIDN'T SEE THAT COMING!

LOCKHORNS

DENNIS THE MENACE

Test your number crunching skill with our unique puzzle

SUDOKU

		3			9			8
6	5			2	3	4	7	
7		9						
		4		1	7	9	8	
	3	7				6	1	
	1	2	3	8		7		
						5		6
	9	5	6	4			3	7
4			5			8		

EASY

- Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.
- Each sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing.

Solutions to Saturday’s puzzle

8	9	2	5	7	3	1	6	4
4	5	6	8	1	9	3	7	2
7	1	3	2	4	6	9	8	5
9	2	8	6	3	7	5	4	1
6	3	5	1	2	4	7	9	8
1	4	7	9	8	5	6	2	3
5	7	4	3	6	2	8	1	9
2	8	9	7	5	1	4	3	6
3	6	1	4	9	8	2	5	7

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CIBRH
CRNUH
PNNKIA
GRAAUJ

I'm not feeling it today.
It will be nice to have the cave to ourselves for once.
MOST OF THE BATS WERE FLYING OUT OF THE CAVE, BUT A FEW DECIDED TO ---

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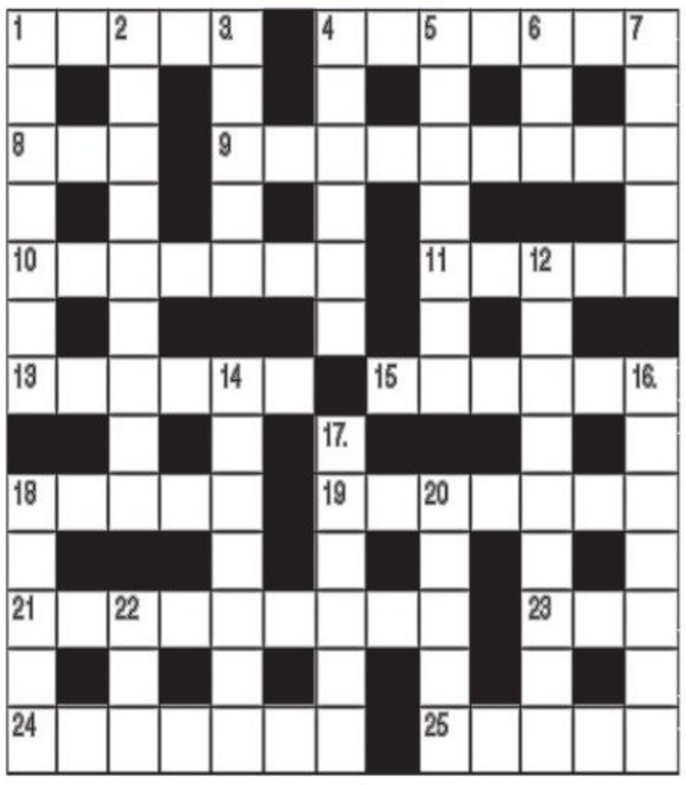
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print your answer here: ( ) ( )

(Answers Monday)

Saturday’s Jumbles: RATIO FUDGE SOCKET LUNACY
Answer: When Gideon Sundback showed how his new zipper worked, people were — “FASTEN-ATED”

CROSS WORD



ACROSS

1 Indications of cover-up in monastic habits (5)
4 Sign on the railway provides something to read (7)
8 Got together inside sometimes (3)
9 A list of articles in not very bad shape (9)
10 Speak to one’s home (7)
11 He’s put in little work yet has expectations (5)
13 They may turn up trumps sometimes (6)
15 Feel in form like a cat (6)
18 Pound piece (5)
19 Fair weather saint? (7)
21 An item in a lifeless form (9)
23 And the rest appears in brief (3)
24 How time flies (7)
25 The first letter requests jobs to do (5)

DOWN

1 Drawing instrument traditionally boxed (7)
2 Taken back though retired (9)
3 Shoot a bird (5)
4 Pointlessly subject to being extravagant (6)
5 Has been changed in spirit (7)
6 Central Lagos in the past (3)
7 They have their ups and downs as playthings (2-3)
12 Invaluable? Absurd! (9)
14 They are raised up for anyone to see (7)
16 Draws dissected Eastern insect (7)
17 Fights for food left over (6)
18 Green fruit (5)
20 Not inclined to build (5)
22 She’s partly Javanese (3)

SATURDAY’S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Open one eye, 8 Paged, 9 Epithet, 10 Sea wall, 11 Uncle, 12 Policy, 14 Regard, 17 Nehru, 19 Refrain, 21 Nonplus, 22 Chile, 23 Distressed.

Down: 2 Pigtail, 3 Nadia, 4 Needle, 5 Epicure, 6 Ethic, 7 Attendance, 8 Postponing, 13 Couples, 15 Avarice, 16 Eraser, 18 Honed, 20 Focus.

> Don't believe what Congress says. When your turn comes, please get vaccinated and India will soon become a corona-free country
>
> Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

DAY 2 ENDS WITH FEWER JAB TAKERS

Only 58% of healthcare workers take vax shot on second day; Co-WIN portal faces snags again

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

DAY 2 of the vaccination drive on Sunday too saw a poor turnout of healthcare workers, with only 58% getting vaccinated. And the Co-WIN portal again faced glitches.

Bengaluru Urban had 63 session sites planned for the vaccination in five places which included both private and government sectors. While 41 sites were identified in Manipal Hospitals, Old Airport Road, 14 sites in Baptist Hospital, 7 sites in St Philomena's Hospital and 1 site was identified in Cox Town Government Maternity Hospital.

The Outpatient Departments in the hospitals were turned into session sites. Health Minister Dr Sudhakar K had visited Manipal Hospitals and was happy with the arrangements made. It had an atmosphere of an election as the index finger of the healthcare workers was inked after they got vaccinated. There was even a photo booth where those vaccinated could pose for pictures.

At Manipal Hospitals, while the target was to vaccinate 4,055 beneficiaries, only 2,704 turned up. DR Manish Rai, Hospital Director, said, "The reason is because some are on long leave while a few pregnant and lactating mothers are advised against getting vaccinated. We intend to cover most of them in the second drive planned shortly."

According to BBMP Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad, the main reasons for people not turning up were because some were still in the 'wait and watch' mode, some were travelling or out of station, others were on leave following extended weekend after Sankranthi, and many had fever or other health ailments. Another reason was some mobile numbers were wrong and the healthcare workers could not be intimated in advance, he said.

However, he said, that the overall perception was very good as no major reactions or side effects were observed.

At Baptist Hospital, healthcare workers ranging from 19 years to 66 years got the jab though many skipped it.

"There are still apprehensions among the healthcare workers about the vaccination. However, those vaccinated are talking to other workers about their experience to boost their morale," said a senior doctor at the hospital.

Nursing students got vaccinated on Sunday and Anty Anthoni was the first one. They were given the jab at St Philomena's Hospital.

On Sunday, the Co-WIN portal did not work and the hospitals had to manually add the details of the healthcare workers. "There has been a problem with the Co-WIN portal. We are sorting that out and are expecting the portal to work fine from Monday onwards," said Minister Sudhakar.

He requested those who have taken the jab to come back on the 28th day to take the second dose of vaccination.

"Everyone who has got vaccinated should still follow all the Covid norms like wearing a mask, social distancing and hand hygiene. This apart, experts have stated that after vaccination, one needs to avoid alcohol in the 28-day period," said Sudhakar.

He said that awareness will be carried out. "Senior doctors who have got vaccinated will be asked to put up videos to create awareness," he added.

Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar meets health workers at Manipal Hospital in Bengaluru. The vaccination drive commenced at private hospitals on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

'Should not let our guard down post shot'

Everyone has worked tirelessly to bring the Covid situation under control, said **Dr H Sudarshan Ballal**, Chairman of Manipal Hospitals on Sunday. "About 4,000 people have been identified to be vaccinated. However, one should not let their guard down after getting vaccinated. Wearing a mask, using sanitiser and maintaining all Covid norms will effectively stop the spread of the virus," Dr Ballal, who himself got vaccinated on Saturday, said. "I am glad that I was offered the vaccine. We should be thankful to all the ministers, pharma companies, and scientists for coming up with the vaccines. It is well-tested and all healthcare workers must take the jab." **ENS**

Details can be entered manually if OTP not generated: BBMP commissioner

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BRUHAT Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Commissioner **N Manjunatha Prasad** on Sunday said that even if people do not receive the generated OTP before their vaccination, details can be entered manually.

He added that as per the government's directions, data of all those to get vaccinated should be uploaded on the Co-Win portal, but there are cases where the OTP does not get generated. "Hence, the correct data can be collected using the offline mode and later the correct information can be uploaded on the portal," he added.

Speaking to media on the sidelines of inspecting the vaccination drive in Manipal Hospital, on Old Airport Road, Prasad said, people should not be left out just because they haven't been communicated through electronic communication. "Health officials should take details of everyone manually also and then give the vaccine," the Palike commissioner said.

He added that on Saturday, in six centres, only 475 people got the message, and of these, 375 people people were vaccinated. The same should continue.

"Of the 1.82 lakh vaccines announced, 1,05,000 vaccines have come and are stored in Dasappa Hospital. They will be sent in special vehicles with cold storage boxes just a day before being administered," he added.

From Monday onwards, 141 PSUs and 7,300 health workers will be administered with the vaccine. In Bengaluru's 106 private hospitals, 42,000 workers will be administered with the vaccine. Also, in nine medical colleges 28,000 will be vaccinated.

Prasad said the target has been set and health officials will try to administer it to as many as possible.

More vaccine centres need to be opened, says senior doctor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BBMP Commissioner Manjunatha Prasad said that from Monday, 7,300 health workers will be vaccinated at 141 public health units in Bengaluru alone. "At 106 private hospitals, 42,000 workers will be administered the vaccine and at nine medical colleges, 28,000 will be vaccinated," he said.

Depending on the preparedness of private hospitals in other districts, the number of vaccination sites will also be increased. "All hospitals are prepared to begin the vaccine programme, but DCs of respective districts will take the decision. Vaccines have reached across the state," Dr Sudhakar said.

Though he had hoped that more number of people would get vaccinated on the second day, Manipal Hospital saw 2,704 beneficiaries. From the target of 6,327 beneficiaries, 3,699 people took the jab across Bengaluru and Udupi districts.

"There has been no major adverse effects in the state. People will soon start coming forward to take the vaccine and to ensure that we manage to finish all the seven lakh-odd population who have registered in the first phase, the government should open more sites," said a senior doctor from the Covid Advisory Committee.

However, experts are still worried about CoWIN portal not working. The problems with the portal were experienced on Day 2 also at most sites. The staff, however, have been instructed to make manual entries of all the beneficiaries.

"Right now, we are managing it manually. Though it is a tedious process, our staff feel it is safe. It is not a problem now, but once we start administering vaccines to the public, it will be a big mess. But I am sure the Centre will look into this soon," explained a senior doctor.

"The portal issue is being addressed," said Dr Sudhakar.

Health workers at Manipal Hospital after getting vaccinated in Bengaluru | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Vax drive on Sunday

BENGALURU URBAN
Session sites **63**
Target for the day **6,227**
Target achieved **3659**

UDUPI
Session site **1**
Target for the day **100**
Target achieved **40**

UDUPI SEES TWO CASES OF MILD ADVERSE REACTION TO VACCINE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Udupi

TWO cases of Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI), where patients developed stomach ache, were reported on the second day of vaccination in Udupi on Sunday. However, both these cases, one from TMA Pai Hospital and the other from an urban health centre in Udupi, were mild symptoms, DHO Dr Sudhirchandra Sooda said.

Those vaccinated in the above centres complained of mild stomach ache, Dr Sooda said, adding this could mostly be due to apprehension, anxiety and nothing to do with the vaccine. "Both the patients who reported AEFI are doing fine," he said, adding the health team will go ahead with the vaccination programme as per the schedule.

As many as 40 more frontline health workers at TMA Pai Hospital received the vaccine on Sunday. Dr Sooda said the number could pick up by Tuesday or Wednesday, once there is clarity in the minds of beneficiaries on AEFI cases, if any. "This is the reason why I along with Dr Prashant Bhat, district Covid nodal officer and Dr M G Rama, district RCH officer, took the vaccine shots on Saturday," he said.

The drive could also receive a boost once technical snags with Co-WIN app are resolved, he said.

EXPRESS READ

City records 464 positive cases

BENGALURU: While Karnataka recorded 745 positive cases on Sunday, Bengaluru contributed the highest chunk with 464 new cases. Even though the numbers have come down to less than 20 a day in many districts, Bengaluru has been consistently recording a high number of cases, which is the highest contributer to the state. **ENS**

'I feel honoured, was worried about my family'

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

WHILE healthcare workers were listed to take the Covid vaccine in the first phase, Baptist Hospital authorities made a rare gesture by including 65-year-old Mallesha D, a security consultant at the hospital, in the vaccination drive.

Mallesha D

Mallesha, a retired superintended of police, currently works as a security consultant at the hospital.

In July last year, he was infected with Covid, as he was at the forefront of supervising the security staff in Covid wards and also moving around departments to check security detail.

Mallesha said, "I feel honoured. As we have been at the forefront, we were also included in the list to be vaccinated. I know the problems one faces after getting infected with Covid. I was four days at hospital with complete rest when I got infected. With me working here, my family members and granddaughter who is 1-year-old were at high risk. After getting the vaccination, I feel much relieved that they can be safe. I did not have any side-effects. Everyone should come forward to take the vaccine. At the end of the day, prevention is better than cure."

'Wanted to set an example to other health workers'

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

While many healthcare workers are still apprehensive about Covid vaccines, 80-year-old Dr K Subbalakshmi, the Casualty Medical Officer who has been working at St Philomena's Hospital since 2009, was one of the oldest doctors in the state to get the Covishield vaccine on Sunday. Dr Subbalakshmi said she wanted to take the jab to set an example to all healthcare workers that there is no harm in getting vaccinated.

Dr K Subbalakshmi

Though suffering from comorbidities like diabetes, hypertension and osteoporosis, she still decided to get the vaccination without worrying about side-effects. She was the first doctor at the hospital to get vaccinated.

"First, I was confident of taking the vaccine and when I got administered, I felt glad about my decision. Due to my comorbidities, they checked my vitals before vaccination. Everything was normal and I got the vaccine administered. I was kept in the observation room for 30 minutes and I did not face any side-effects. The idea is to be a role model to other health workers. If I, despite being old and suffering from comorbidities, have taken the vaccine, others too should come forward," she said.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE NO. SR-TVC0SnT(TEND)/3/2020/06 DATED: 13.01.2021
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Thiruvananthapuram - 14 for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-Tenders for the following work.
Sl. No.1:
Tender No.: TVC-SNT-SIG-20-21-14
Name of Work: Annual zonal contract for S&T - DSTE [NEM(Excl)-NCJ/CAPE-TEN(Excl)] Section in TVC Division
Cash Value (Approx.) : ₹ 25,00,000/-
Earnest Money Deposit: ₹ 50,000/-
Sl. No.2:
Tender No.: TVC-SNT-SIG-20-21-15
Name of work: Annual zonal Contract for S&T-ADSTE/TVC[ERS(Excl)-ALLP-KYJ-CNGR-NEM(Incl)] Section in TVC Division.
Cash Value (Approx.) : ₹ 35,00,000/-
Earnest Money Deposit: ₹ 70,000/-
Sl.No. 1 - 2: Last Date for Receipt of Tender: 15.02.2021 14.00 Hrs.
Sl.No. 1 - 2: Completion Period: 12 Months
Complete details & tender document will be available at www.ireps.gov.in
Divisional Railway Manager/ S&T/Thiruvananthapuram-14
Follow us on : twitter.com/GMSRailway

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BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF THE ACMM AT BANGALORE
CRL.MISC.No.430/2020
BETWEEN: Mahendra R, S/o. Ramu, # No.249, 3rd Line, Opp to Ganesha temple, Gandhipuram Whitefield, Bangalore-560066. ...PETITIONER
AND: Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Hudson Circle, Bangalore. ...RESPONDENT
PUBLIC NOTICE
In the above case the petitioner has filed the petitioner for issue of the death certificate of his brother **Mr. Ramesh who was died on 21/07/2006**, at the above petitioner address, if any parties have any objections with regard to issue of Death certificate may appear before the hon'ble ACJM court, Bangalore on **22/01/2021, at 11.00 AM.**
Given under my hand and seal of the court dated this the **13 day of December 2020.**
By order of the court
Sd/- Sheristedar, Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Bangalore Rural District, Bangalore.
Bangalore, Dated: 13/1/2021

PUBLIC NOTICE
(LOST OF DOCUMENT)
General Public is hereby informed that my client **Mr. Santhosh Jain,** has lost the Original Sale Deed dt : 10/07/1996 Doc No. 2186/1996 in respect of Site No. 30, situated at Mathigiri Village Hosur Taluk, Kelamangalam SRO Office Jurisdiction and has also filed a Police Compliant Dt : 14-01-2020 U/S 155 CRPC before the Jurisdictional Police authority hence. Any person having found the said document may kindly be requested to return to the below mentioned contact details.
Mr. Vinod Kumar, Advocate
No. 60, 2nd Cross, RS Garden Layout, Bommasandra, Bangalore-560094
M : 9036690352

PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the petitioner by name **Mr. Nanjappa** has filed petition under **C.Misc.No.5077/2020** for obtaining an order Seeking direction to the commissioner, Registrar of B & D. BBMP, Bengaluru. to enter the death of petitioner's Grandfather named as **Daliga S/o. Muniya,** who was died **on 08-08-1974** at No.E-17, 1 Cross and main Road, Vivekananda Nagar, Dasarahalli, Bengaluru-560057, and accordingly obtain death Certificate from the respondent. If any person interested to file their objections in this matter may appear at **11.00 am on 21.01.2021** to which date the case was posted for hearing before the Hon'ble XII ACMM Bengaluru on hearing date from the date of issuance of this notice.
Advocate for petitioner:
H.Munirathnaiah, Advocate,
No.590/1, Hebbal, Bengaluru-560024.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Our client **Leelavati Virendra Teggimani,** (Represented by GPA Holder-Dr.Virendra Teggimani) intends to purchase the Schedule Property from Sri H.E. Harsha S/o. H.V. Eswaraiah and Smt Seema Harsha W/o. Sri.H.E.Harsha. As such, our client has entered into Agreement to Sell with Sri. H.E. Harsha S/o H.V. Eswaraiah and Smt. Seema Harsha W/o. Sri. H.E. Harsha. If any person/s have/has any claim over the Schedule Property or any objection for the purchase of the Schedule Property by our client, he/she/they may lodge his/her/their claim and objection in writing to the undersigned with documentary proof within **fifteen days** from today, failing which, it will be deemed that there are no claims or objections and/or that the claim/s if any, has/have been given up and our clients will proceed with the transaction of purchasing the Schedule Property as being free from all claims, encumbrance etc,.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Flat No.016, First Floor, totally measuring 1883 Sq.ft, of super built up area in the residential apartment building complex known as "Krishna Gardenia" with RCC roofing, Mosaic flooring, doors made of Honne wood and steel windows and two car parking space in the basement exclusively earmarked for the use and enjoyment, inclusive of proportionate share in the common areas such as passages, lobbies, lift, stair-case and other common area situated at Dollors Colony, RMV 2nd Stage, New BEL Road, Sanjaynagar Ward No.100, Bengaluru- 560094 and bounded on :
East by : 5th Main Road RMV 2nd Stage;
West by : Muniyanna's Land;
North by : Balappa's Land;
South by : Doddahanumanthappa's Land.
ABHINAV .R, Advocates
Kumar & Kumar Advocates,
F-113, 3rd Floor, Central Chambers, 2nd main, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru-560009.
Date : 16.01.2021.

INDIAN INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY
JEE (Advanced) 2021
Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced) 2021 [JEE (Advanced) 2021] for admission to various programs (listed at **https://jeeadv.ac.in**) of all IITs will be held as per the following schedule:-

Date : Saturday, July 03, 2021	
Paper - 1	09:00 - 12:00 IST
Paper - 2	14:30 - 17:30 IST
Both the papers are compulsory.	

JEE (Advanced) 2021 will be conducted in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode. Visit **https://jeeadv.ac.in** for details & updates.
Organizing Chairman

Government of India
Department of Atomic Energy
Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research
1-10-153/156, AMD Complex, Begumpet, Hyderabad
ADVERTISEMENT NO. AMD-1/2021
Applications are invited from eligible candidates for purely temporary project posts of Laboratory Assistant (18) and Project Associate-I (17) in this Directorate for a period of two years extendable by one more year and co-terminus with the duration of the project on consolidated pay against the project "Improvement of Laboratory Capabilities".
Please visit AMD's website (www.amd.gov.in) for detailed advertisement, application format and further details. Applications in the prescribed format should be submitted thro' **e-mail only** from 18.01.2021 to 23.01.2021. Applications received after due date or applications received by post / courier will not be accepted.
Chief Administrative & Accounts Officer

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR
Directorate Head Quarter, Social Welfare
Near 2nd MR Gate
A.T. Line, Imphal – 795001
NOTIFICATION
Imphal, the 14th January, 2021
No. 5/1/13-SW(ICDS): Tenders are invited for supply of **2 Packaged Medicine Kits-Medicine Kit-Main & Medicine Kit-Mini for use in the AWCs and Mini AWCs under** Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Manipur. Interested bidders may download detailed tender documents from the following websites:
i) www.manipur.gov.in
ii) www.manipurtenders.gov.in
iii) www.socialwelfare.mn.gov.in
2. Bids are to be submitted **online through e-Procurement/Tender portal https://manipurtenders.gov.in**.
3. Modification/Amendment/Corrigendum, if any shall not be advertised in the newspapers, but shall be uploaded in the website i.e., **www.socialwelfare.mn.gov.in**
Sd/- (Ngangom Uttam Singh)
Director (Social Welfare) Manipur

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public are informed that my client **Mr. SURESH. N.,** has proposed to purchase property bearing BDA Site No. 1276, of HENNUR Ballary Road Extension, 1st Stage, IV Division, Bangalore, presently under the jurisdiction of BBMP, measuring to an extent of **East to West 30 feet and North to South 40 feet,** totally measuring about **1200 Sq.feet or 133.33 Square yards** and bounded on the **East by:** Road ; **West by:** Site No. 1263; **North by:** Site No. 1275; **South by:** Site No .1277; from it's present Owner from Mrs..**V. NAGARATHNA** W/o S. Ramachandra vendor had acquired the Schedule Property vide registered Sale Deed executed dated 14.12.2000, registered as document No.1997/2000-01 registered before the Office of the Addl Sub-Registrar, Bangalore Development Authority.
Persons having any right over the said property may lodge their objections/claims with documentary evidence within 10 days from this day to the undersigned. In the absence of any claims within the above said period, it shall be deemed that there are no such claims or that if there are any claims and they have not been made, it shall be deemed to have been waived and a valid and binding conveyance will be executed in my client favor without any further reference in this regard.
P. NAGAMUNI REDDY, Advocate
SNN Associates, No. 57, 'Nithyashree' 2nd Main, Munireddy Layout, Horamavu Signal, Near Maharaja Furniture on Service Road, Bangalore-560 043. M – 9945159840 & 9035690962

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public are hereby informed that my client **Mr. Bapu Krishna Prasad** S/o Sri. Srnivasa Murthy aged about 51 years residing at Residing at No. 49, 27th Main, Annaiah Reddy Layout, 6th Phase J.P. Nagara, Bangalore 560078 had executed **General Power of Attorney on 28.02.1996** in favour of his brother **Sri. B. Nanda Kishore** S/o. Sri. B. Srinivasa Murthy to do all works on behalf of him to purchase the properties in and around Bangalore, since the said work was completed as per my client's requirements to the limit of said General Power of Attorney. Hence my client was requested his brother to return back and hand over the above said General Power of Attorney dated 28.02.1996 to my client for cancellation of the same, but GPA Holder not returned the same saying that said General Power of Attorney was misplaced and it is not in his custody.
Notice is hereby given to all concerned calling that, since my client had no other alternate way to cancel the unregistered General Power Attorney dated 28.02.1996 as per the procedural law instead of issuing Notice to his GPA holder, accordingly **issued Notice to GPA Holder on 16.01.2021 for cancellation of GPA dated 28.02.1996** and also issuing this Public notice for cancellation of said GPA. My Client is hereby instructed and informed general public that he has cancelled unregistered General Power of Attorney dated 28.02.1996 by way issuing this public notice and herein after the said General power of attorney is not in action and in case any transaction or action on the basis of the said General Power of Attorney taken said transaction or action is not binding on my client, which is to be considered as illegal and Void-ab-initio. It is further informed that, in case anyone found it and if they took any malafide forged transaction on the basis of the said document which to be considered as illegal transaction.
S.D. LAW ASSOCIATES
Advocate and Consultants
No.87 Opp. 43A BMTC Bus Stop,
Vivekananda Nagar, Kathriguppe Main Road,
BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore 560085.
(M) 9845930803

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public are hereby informed that my client **Mr. Bapu Ram Prasad** S/o Sri. Srnivasa Murthy aged about 51 years residing at Residing at No. 49, 27th Main, Annaiah Reddy Layout, 6th Phase J.P. Nagara, Bangalore 560078 had executed **General Power of Attorney on 28.02.1996** in favour of his brother **Sri. B Sham Sundar** S/o. Sri. B. Srinivasa Murthy to do all works on behalf of him to purchase the properties in and around Bangalore, since the said work was completed as per my client's requirements to the limit of said General Power of Attorney. Hence my client was requested his brother to return back and hand over the above said General Power of Attorney dated 28.02.1996 to my client for cancellation of the same, but GPA Holder not returned the same saying that said General Power of Attorney was misplaced and it is not in his custody.
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S.D. LAW ASSOCIATES
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No.87 Opp. 43A BMTC Bus Stop,
Vivekananda Nagar, Kathriguppe Main Road
BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore 560085.
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TAMIL NADU HOUSING BOARD
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SPECIAL PROJECT CIRCLE –I, CHENNAI - 600 035.
TENDER NOTICE NO: SE/SPC-1/ 07/ 2020-2021 **Dated : 13.01.2021**
Sealed pre-qualification tenders in two cover system are invited for the following work by the Superintending Engineer, Special Project Circle-I, Tamil Nadu Housing Board No.493, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035.

Sl. No.	Description of work	Approximate value Rs.	EMD Amount in Rupees
1	2	3	4
1	Construction of Tower 1 (2BF+ GF+ 20 Floors), Tower 2 (2BF + GF + 16 Floors), Tower 3 (2BF + GF + 15 Floors), and SKYBRIDGE for Tamil Nadu Commerce Hub (TNCH) at Nandanam, Anna Salai, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.	INR 486.50 Crore	INR 2.45 Crore

Last date for receipt of tender **18.02.2021** upto **3.00 pm.**, Date of Opening of tender **18.02.2021** at **3.30 pm.**, Date of available of tender document from **29.01.2021** to **17.02.2021** until **5.00 pm.** Cost of Tender Document Rs. 15,750/- including GST.
CONDITIONS FOR ISSUE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS :
1. The Contractors registered (the registration certificate should be reclassified and renewed up to date) under class-I in TNHB, PWD, TNPHC, TNSCB and other Government/ Quasi Government Departments with appropriate monitory limit are eligible to participate in the tender.
2. Further particulars and tender documents can be had from the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Special Project Circle-I, Tamil Nadu Housing Board, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai-35.
3. The Tender schedule can also be downloaded from the website **www.tenders.tn.gov.in** at free of cost. If there are any corrections/ omissions in the tenderer will be noticed in the website only.
No. 493, Anna Salai, TNHB, Nandanam, Chennai – 600 035. Phone No. 044–24353544. DIPR/ 284 /TENDER/2021
Superintending Engineer Special Project Circle-I.

Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said Chartered Accountants should provide creative solutions to the government on matters of taxation. He was speaking after inaugurating the ITT facility at the Bengaluru branch of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India office

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Smoking gun, promises Vishwanath

Bombay Days will be out soon, says a teaser by the author, BJP MLC A H Vishwanath, colourful poet-politician who was nominated to the Legislative Council. Bombay Days may sound like a fast flick, but promises to be a political thriller -- a tell-all of the journey of 17 rebel MLAs from Bengaluru to Mumbai, and their 45-day stay in a star hotel in 2019 to bring down the Congress-JDS government. His hints have created quite a stir, with a few accusing Vishwanath of trying to make leaders fall in line and induct him into the ministry. Whether it gets the party bigwigs' attention or not, Bombay Days could be a testimony of the power change in Karnataka.

DKS gets busy with wedding

KPCC president D K Shivakumar is busy with the fatherly duty of inviting guests for his daughter Aishwarya's marriage with Amartya, son of Cafe Coffee Day founder late Siddhartha Hegde and grandson of former CM S M Krishna. On Sunday, he called on Siddaganga Mutt's Sri Siddalinga Swami, offered the wedding card and sought the Swami's blessings. But later, he didn't miss a chance to talk politics -- taking up the sizzling-hot language issue, he said the BJP had ignored Kannada as it had little respect for the people, and wanted to impose its own hidden agenda.

If looks could kill...

The cold war between two heavyweights from Belagavi -- Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi and Water Resources Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi -- is no secret within and outside the BJP. No doubt one sees the other as interloper. This was evident in a telling picture of the two leaders who shared the stage on Sunday, garlanding Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa as part of Home Minister Amit Shah's Janasevak rally in Belagavi. The killer timing of the click shows Savadi staring at Jarkiholi — a momentary action — giving away the not-so-subtle rivalry between the two leaders. If looks could kill... this one is framed forever.

Sorry, can't repair helicopters: Dr G

Former Deputy Chief Minister Dr G Parameshwara, having kept a pack of journalists waiting for over an hour, sought their pardon in his own humorous way. The scribes were waiting at the District Congress Committee office in Shivamogga for the press meet to start, at 11.30am on Sunday. But Dr G arrived at 12.40pm, and no doubt, spotted the irritation on their faces. "When I was readying to leave for Shivamogga, the helicopter in which I was travelling encountered a technical glitch. I would have repaired the helicopter if I knew how to do it. Since I did not know, I had to wait till it was repaired. So I came a bit late. I apologise for the same," Parameshwara quipped.

LAWS WILL DOUBLE FARM INCOME: SHAH

Says govt will not repeal farm laws, will implement them soon | Attacks Cong, says it's playing cheap politics, misleading farmers | 'Centre can't ignore interests of crores due to agitators' demands'

Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches the Janasevak Samavesh along with state BJP chief Nalin Kumar Kateel at the district stadium in Belagavi on Sunday evening. Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, Union Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi and other party leaders look on | EXPRESS

MAHESH M GOUDAR @Bagalkot

THE top priority of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is to double the income of farmers with the implementation of three new farm laws, said Union Home Minister Amit Shah, here on Sunday.

Though farmers have been protesting against the laws on Delhi borders for nearly two months now, Shah asserted that the government will not repeal the laws. "These farm laws, which are aimed at enriching the lives of farmers by strengthening them financially, will be implemented in the coming days," he said. "When the BJP announced that it will double the income of farmers by 2022, leaders from Congress laughed at us. But, now, we are inching towards achieving that goal by bringing new laws in the farming sector," he said.

"Congress is an anti-farmer party. It is indulging in cheap politics by misleading farmers about new farm laws. It has not done anything for the welfare of farmers when it was in power. It has no right to speak about farmers," he added.

Continuing his attack on the principal opposition party, Shah said, "When Congress was at the helm, it used to announce around Rs 21,000 crore for the agriculture sector in its annual budget. But after Modi took office, it has gone up to over Rs 1 lakh crore."

On pro-farmer policies of the government, he said, "Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana, Rs 6,000 per year is being credited directly into each farmers' account. It is benefitting approximately nine crore farmers. We are spending over Rs 1.10 lakh crore every fiscal year for one scheme aimed at benefitting farmers, which is five times the Congress budget for agriculture. This clearly shows who is more committed to farmers' welfare." The Modi-led government aims to increase the production of ethanol by 25 per cent by 2025.

Point out flaws, we will set right: Shah

In Belagavi, Shah said that it is not possible to ignore the interests of crores of farmers in the country at the cost of those on an agitation in New Delhi. "We (Union government) have repeatedly asked the agitators to point out flaws in the farm laws, if any, so that they could be set right. But the protesters close their ears, refusing to listen to anything the government wants to talk about. The only thing the agitators want is the repeal of farm laws," said Shah.

Shah held a meeting of party leaders in Belagavi on Sunday. Briefing reporters, Rajya Sabha Member Iranna Kadadi said, "The Centre is prepared to take all possible measures to make corrections in the laws if that is what the agitators want. If they are not ready to get the issue amicably resolved, the Centre will not sacrifice the interests of crores of farmers at the cost of the agitators' demands."

FARMERS PROTEST SHAH'S VISIT

Members of various farmer associations, like the Hasiru Sene, welcomed Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his visit to Belagavi on Sunday by taking out a protest rally and venting their ire with slogans like 'Amit Shah go back'. The farmers staged a protest in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office, seeking an open debate on Farm Bills, APMC Bill and other legislations. They also took out a protest rally from the Rani Channamma Circle and were later taken into protective custody. The farmers also raised slogans against the local BJP leaders for not allowing them to meet Shah.

State BJP will bag 150 seats: Yediyurappa

MAHESH M GOUDAR @Bagalkot

CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa has assured Union Home Minister Amit Shah of winning more than 150 seats in the coming Assembly elections in the state. He was speaking after accompanying Shah for the ground breaking ceremony of an ethanol production plan of MRN (Nirani) Group of Industries at Kerakalamatti village near Badami on Sunday.

Addressing the gathering, Yediyurappa said, "Winning more than 150 seats in the Assembly elections will strengthen the hand of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the state. In this august gathering, I promise the party top brass that we will achieve our goal and will continue to remain at the helm of affairs in the state for another term."

Stating that Karnataka is an industrial-friendly state, the CM said that the introduction of new industrial policies will give a suitable platform for global industries to set-up their units across the state and generate employment. "Amidst the financial difficulties, the government is making its best efforts to continue development works in the state," he added.

"I also assure the people of the state that with the co-operation of PM Modi and Union Minister Shah more funds will be sought for the state to take up development works," the CM said.

He also applauded Minister Murugesh Nirani for the expansion of his industries. The chief minister said, "Nirani is making efforts to fulfil the vision of the Prime Minister by increasing the production of ethanol. It is delightful to read that Nirani Group of Industries is at the top in production of ethanol in the country. With the opening the new production units, it has helped in generating employment and enriching the lives of farmers of this region."

'Give Solapur to K'taka'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

KANNADA Development Authority (KDA) chairman T S Nagabharana too said that Thackeray has made the statement despite knowing that they will not be able to take even an inch of land from Karnataka.

Thackeray on Sunday tweeted, "Bringing Karnataka-occupied Marathi-speaking areas into Maharashtra will be a true tribute to those who accepted martyrdom in the boundary battle. We are united and committed towards it."

T A Narayana Gowda, president, Karnataka Rakshna Vedike, said that all these areas are integral part of Karnataka. "There is no need to discuss this issue," he added. Kananda activist Vatal Nagaraj and Gowda said instead of talking about Marathi-speaking areas, Maharashtra should give Solapur to Karnataka. "Around 120 villages in the border district, where Kannada-speaking people are in majority, have been denied basic facilities. They want to be part of Karnataka," Gowda added.

Yediyurappa has not left out a single chance to develop farmers. He even followed the schemes of the Centre and implemented them. We are happy with his performance. The Union government will provide all necessary assistance for the development of state... We will work towards making the country Atmanirbhar (self-reliant)
Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

Shah puts onus of ensuring party peace on CM

ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

"YOU have been given a free hand in governance. Ensure that you take the party along and address concerns that have been raised," Union Home Minister Amit Shah advised Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa as his two-day visit to the state concluded on Sunday.

Shah, who visited the state at a time when the recent cabinet expansion had led to an unprecedented public display of anger from BJP MLAs, has put the onus of ensuring peace and harmony between the party and the government on Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa.

Sources in the BJP said that while Shah asked state-unit senior leaders to ensure dissent is not voiced in public and to reign in antics of open criticisms, it was on Yediyurappa that he put the onus of sorting issues marring the image of the party.

In closed doors meetings over the weekend, Shah was appraised of both the public accusations and criticisms against Yediyurappa as well as concerns raised by MLAs over allegations of discrepancies in fund allocation, corruption, interference in governance, lack of accessibility to the CMO and choice of postings, including those of boards and corporations.

"Apart from the cabinet picks, a range of issues were brought to the attention of the Home Minister. The crux of the matter is that the Chief Minister has been asked to resolve these concerns and lend an ear to the party and its MLAs," said a party source.

One among the many "disappointed" leaders of the BJP, who is keen to be part of a representation to New Delhi to put forth his contention before the top brass, said whatever issues, henceforth, will only be discussed within the party.

"We will give it a week and watch how things unfurl. We intend to ensure our party gives good governance till this term ends and returns to power for the next. All we ask is for the Chief Minister to consider our concerns and address them," the disgruntled MLA said.

While Yediyurappa was allowed to have his say in cabinet picks, the party is keen on him resolving the issues arising out of his decision as well, especially at a time the senior most leaders of the party are invested in the upcoming key elections in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

Minor rejig of portfolios likely today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister BS Yediyurappa is likely to allocate portfolios to seven new ministers on Monday, sources in the government said. He had earlier stated that portfolios will be allocated after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's weekend visit to Karnataka. The new ministers are likely to be given portfolios that are with the Chief Minister, and additional portfolios that are with other ministers, sources said, adding that there may be a minor reshuffle of portfolios.

"Some ministers hold two or more portfolios and the additional portfolios are likely to be given to new ministers on Monday or in the next two or three days," said a senior minister in the government.

Yediyurappa, who is holding charge of Bengaluru Development, Energy, Finance and several other portfolios, may hand over some of those portfolios, though he is likely to retain Finance and Bengaluru Development, sources said. Minister Aravind Limbavali is said to be keen on Bengaluru Development.

HUE & CRY

BSY WILL BE REMOVED AFTER APRIL: SIDDU

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

AT A time when Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and other BJP leaders are ruling out any change in leadership, Opposition leader Siddaramaiah reiterated that Yediyurappa will be removed from his post after April.

During his visit to Mysuru on Sunday, he told reporters that as per information he got from a source close to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Yediyurappa would be removed from the CM's post after April.

"No senior leader or high command would tell the Chief Minister that he will be removed. If they do so, the government won't be able to run. But as per information I have received, there will be a leadership change and Yediyurappa will be removed after April," Siddaramaiah said.

He also demanded a judicial investigation into the funds given by newly-inducted minister C P Yogeshwar for Operation Kamala, and the alleged "blackmail CD". "A BJP minister (Ramesh Jarkiholi) himself agreed that Yogeshwar has taken crores of rupees as loan to fund Operation Kamala. I demand a judicial investigation by a sitting High Court judge on this and the blackmail CD," he said.

NO CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP IN STATE: KATEEL

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Belagavi

REACTING to Opposition leader Siddaramaiah's comment on leadership change in Karnataka, BJP State President Nalin Kumar Kateel said that many politicians, including Siddaramaiah, are making statements on the political scenario, but there will be no change.

"B S Yediyurappa will continue to lead the government," Kateel told reporters at Sambra Airport in Belagavi on Sunday.

He also questioned Siddaramaiah's source being from the RSS. "From where did Siddaramaiah come? Was he in the RSS earlier? What is his source? First, let him have a proper relation with Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. Do RSS workers speak with such leaders?" he asked.

Meanwhile, many ticket aspirants for the Belagavi bypoll visited Kateel at a private hotel in Belagavi. Former Rajya Sabha member Dr Prabhakar Kore reportedly met Kateel and lobbied for a ticket, besides discussing political developments. There has been much speculation with more than 10 sitting and former MLAs, besides other leaders meeting Kateel on this count.

Don't believe Cong, get your shot: HM

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @Belagavi

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah has assured the people of the country that both Covid vaccines developed in India are absolutely safe. Two vaccines — Covaxin and Covishield — have received Emergency Use Authorisation after going through trials. These two are now being administered during the drive.

Addressing the Janasevak Samavesh of the BJP here on Sunday evening, Shah said the people should not be misguided by Congress over vaccines and get the vaccination done without any fear. Slamming Congress for its opposition to the vaccination drive, Shah said, "We (BJP) know that the Congress can't do anything. But it should not stop someone who is doing something good for the people. Prime Minister Modi himself has taken up the initiative of making the vaccination drive successful," he said.

"Don't believe what Congress says. When your turn comes, please get vaccinated and India will soon become a corona-free country," he said. Shah said that when the Covid crisis hit the country, initially there was talk across the world as to how a country like India with more than 130 crore population would be able to tackle it. Under Modi's leadership, the Covid crisis has been faced so effectively that the country not only is one among many which registered minimum deaths but also where the recovery rate is good, he said.

Thousands attend the rally in Belagavi on Sunday | EXPRESS

Congratulating Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and giving him credit for fighting the Covid battle in the state effectively, Shah said even the PM lauded the CM in this regard.

While appreciating Yediyurappa for some of his major initiatives on the development front in the state, Shah mentioned the country's first toy manufacturing cluster coming up at Koppal. He said, "Children across the country will play with Koppal toys and we won't have to buy from China."

Recalling some major initiatives the Modi-led government took since 2014, Shah said, "Nobody dared to remove Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir in the last 70 years. At last, this was accomplished by the BJP government." Shah said the Centre had been able to resolve the 550-year-old issue of Ram Mandir. "I will assure the people of this country that a mammoth Ram Mandir will come up at Ayodhya in the next few years," he said.

Shah assured the people that the Centre would build houses for every resident of the country by 2022. He appealed to all the 130 crore people of the country to resolve to use everything made in India to help the country become one of the major economies in the world under the PM's Atma Nirbhar initiative.

Actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan on Sunday said he would be undergoing a 'follow-up surgery' on his leg and assured the people that he will be back soon, fully rejuvenated to resume his poll campaign. Following an accident he met with a few years ago, he had undergone a surgery

WILL VACCINE ACHIEVE HERD IMMUNITY? JURY IS OUT

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

Health workers conduct pre-vaccination checkup on a nun before she gets the first shot of Covishield vaccine at St Philomena's Hospital in Bengaluru on Sunday | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

HERD immunity. It's a term that's now in news again as the country began its nationwide rollout of Covid-19 vaccine on Saturday.

The goal of vaccinating the entire population, according to the Union Health Ministry, would be to help states reach a level of herd immunity. What that means is that a majority of the population is immune to an infectious disease, slowing down the rate at which it spreads. But the launch of the vaccination campaign also has reignited a debate on whether herd immunity is possible with only the help of vaccines.

No, said Dr Vishal Rao, Head and Neck Oncologist, who was a pioneer in Karnataka to get permission to perform plasma therapy trials on Covid patients.

According to recent studies, considering that R0 (read as R Naught) of the virus is 3, about 67 to 75 per cent of our population should be immune to the virus. This means that four out of five people would not get sick if they encountered someone who has been infected, possibly unable to spread the disease any further, he explained.

Dr Rao argued, "There's a problem with this perfect image of herd immunity. It is not as simple as it seems. The studies have shown that there is no exact number of R0 and it can vary depending on the population and the virus." According to him, the R0 for SARS-CoV-2 is especially uncertain. In some regions, it is as low as 2 but in some as high as 6, he explained.

Another senior doctor from a renowned government hospital in Bengaluru, on condition of anonymity, said, "Herd immunity is achievable with a vaccine with 70 per cent efficacy against transmission, but would require high coverage in the 18-35 year group in particular, which appears to be a great contributor to the transmission. But then in India, we are looking at older and vulnerable population for containing the spread. Also, the efficacy studies of the two vaccines are not known yet."

Dr Vishal Rao has posed some questions to vaccine manufacturers and the central government on the efficacy of the vaccine itself, which according to the World Health Organisation is an important factor to attain herd immunity.

He said, "The existing data from the vaccine manufacturers only provides evidence of protection against a progressive Covid disease, but not against person-to-person transmission."

Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist at WHO, has made it clear, "Even as vaccines start protecting the most vulnerable, we're not going to achieve any levels of population immunity or herd immunity in 2021. Even if it happens in a couple of pockets, in a few countries, it's not going to protect people across the world."

Experts claimed that even if Karnataka reaches a 70 per cent overall vaccination rate, it can still leave large pockets of the population prone to outbreaks.

"This is the scenario that public health leaders have been warning about for years with diseases like measles. Different communities within the state will also have different herd immunity thresholds. That is because R0 for the virus will be different depending on how populations interact. Dense communities where people live closer together, giving the virus a better chance of spreading, will have higher herd immunity thresholds. Less dense communities will have lower figures," explained a senior doctor from Mangaluru.

A study confirming this was published in 2019 in the journal "Emerging Infectious Diseases". It said, "Because R0 is a function of the effective contact rate, the value of R0 is a function of human social behaviour and organisation, as well as the innate biological characteristics of particular pathogens."

Some experts recently published articles stating that there is "scientific evidence that natural immunity attained after recovery from a Covid infection is effective and long-lasting and hence it may be dangerous to vaccinate all." In his recent report, Jay Bhattacharya, a professor of Medicine at Stanford University, explained, "The immune system responds to infection by various mechanisms, including the production of specific antibodies, T-cells, and B-cells to protect nearly every recovered Covid patient from reinfection. After almost a year of pandemic, globally, only 31 cases and two deaths have been identified as reinfections, out of the 90 million Covid cases and likely hundreds of millions of infections worldwide."

BIG PICTURE

But many senior doctors and researchers like Ananth Bhan, a bioethic researcher, argued against this theory of herd immunity only through natural infection. He said, "We don't know enough about the immunity in a natural infection. It has been shown that the antibody in a Covid-infected patient has been short and a patient is susceptible to infection again."

It is definitely not worth taking the risk with this in a country where there are so many senior citizens and those with comorbidities, the experts argue.

"We are still learning about this virus and also the immunopathology of vaccine as one of the responses. There is no one size fits all. Covid precautions like wearing masks, social distancing, washing of hands are important. Though the number of infections is falling, we cannot test the antibody levels of each person who has been vaccinated. It is better to use vaccination as a prime strategy to prevent infection," Dr Bhan said.

Dr Manjunath, Director of Jayadeva Institute of Cardiology and member of Covid Advisory Committee who has also treated many Covid patients, said, "We have seen that immunoglobin G (IgG) levels of those who have recovered from Covid have been very low. Vaccinating even those will definitely boost further immunity. Though we know that quite a considerable percentage of the population in the state would have already been infected, it is advisable to take the vaccine."

Senior doctors said that the concept of herd immunity has proved wrong not only in countries like Sweden but also in cities like Mumbai, Delhi and now in Kerala. Dr Shashikiran Umakanth, Professor and HoD, Nodal Officer for Covid, Dr TMA Pai Hospital, Udupi said, "Though we wish that we have natural immunity, we cannot take the disease for granted. Also, the vaccination drive is not yet powered to achieve herd immunity. We have to be clear that this drive is to give protection to the vulnerable population."

Some epidemiologists who have analysed the health ministry's goal of giving shots 60-80 per cent of the population, which translates to about 80 to 100 crore people over the next few months, said, "This means the government machinery will have to be mobilised to carry out over 25 lakh vaccinations per day, as opposed to three lakh-odd shots being given during Phase 1."

A senior virologist from Dakshina Kannada said, "The government may be able to achieve herd immunity by August when the country will have 22 per cent of the population vaccinated. But to achieve herd immunity or reach closer to that target, we will still need to cover over 50 crore more people. Post-August 15, if we continue at the same pace, it will take us eight months to cover 90 crore people. So if we double the pace of the vaccination in mid-April 2022, we can reach the target by the end of that year."

But Dr Sudarshan Ballal, Chairman, Manipal Hospitals, said, "Considering that 50 per cent of them would have already been infected and if we are vaccinating even another 30 per cent of the population that is vulnerable, I feel we would have achieved the herd immunity target."

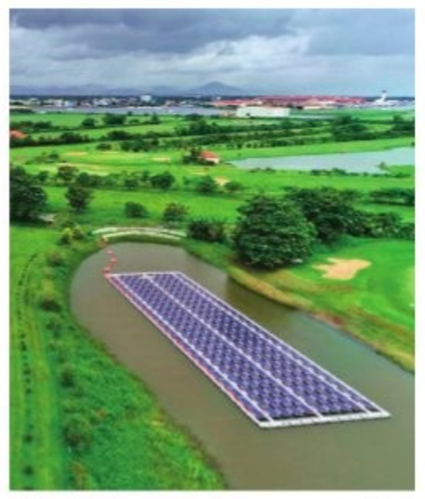
The debate on natural immunity versus herd immunity through vaccines has kicked up a storm in social media circuits. Senior doctors, however, said that the trajectory of the disease is in people's hands and we should all contribute to stop the pandemic. "Getting vaccinated doesn't mean that we don't wear masks, follow social distancing and maintain hand hygiene. Covid is not over yet. A vast majority of people are still vulnerable. We have to protect them," said Medical Education and Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar.

ECO-FRIENDLY

Kochi airport gets floating solar panels

It will assist airstrip in powering its activities using green energy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi



A floating solar energy panel set up near Cochin Airport runway | EXPRESS

THE Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL), which operates the world's first fully solar-powered airport, on Sunday commissioned one of the biggest floating solar power plants in Kerala.

With the plant, which has a capacity to produce 452 KWh, the total installed capacity of the airport has increased to 40 MWp, helping it produce around 1.6 lakh units of power a day, against its daily consumption of nearly 1.3 lakh units, said a release by CIAL. The initiative will assist the airport in powering its activities using green energy, it said.

"The airport also achieved another milestone with this installation, that of introducing cost-effective high-density polyethylene floats, using French technology, on which 1,300 photovoltaic panels were mounted and laid over two artificial lakes located on the 130-acre CIAL golf course," it said.

The plant, which covers a total area of one acre, is connected to the KSEB power grid which is to be banked on when needed.

"Pre-commissioning trials showed that these panels, which cost around ₹2 crore, are producing power with maximum output efficiency among the eight solar power plants installed by CIAL on the airport premises," the release said.

CIAL founder managing director V J Kurian attributed the plant's success to the company's relentless efforts in bringing in new technologies and its working philosophy which is at par with global standards.

"CIAL has been reinventing itself since its formation. One of our innovations, which proved that relying on green energy is possible even for high-energy consumers like an airport, won us the Champions of the Earth award instituted by the UN. We are committed to the protection of nature and are trying our best to reduce carbon footprint," Kurian said.

He said CIAL successfully executed the idea of total sustainability management (TSM) in its golf course where water treated at the airport's sewage treatment plant is used for harvesting water with the help of 12 artificial lakes. The water from the lakes is used to irrigate the lawns of the golf course and now, with the installation of the floating power plants, it has taken another leap forward in TSM, he said.

Traditionally, the installation of the floating power plant costs two to three times more than that of the ground-mounted one. However, with the introduction of novel French technology, also for the first time in the country, it could bring down the cost at par with that of floor installation.

Seer writes to Shah over desecration of temples

ENS @ Udupi

SRI Vishwaprasanna Theertha of Sri Pejawar Mutt, Udupi, has written to Home Minister Amit Shah over the issue of desecration of Lord Ram idol at the ancient Sita Lakshmana Kodandarama temple on the Bodikonda hillock at Vizianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh. He said in the letter that the vandalism has enraged the entire Hindu community.

His letter stated that miscreants broke open the historical temple and desecrated the 400-year-old Ram idol in the sanctum sanctorum. "The severed portion of the idol was later retrieved from the nearby temple pond. The horrific incident took place 20 days ago. But the Andhra Pradesh government has done nothing to apprehend the miscreants. The state government's indifference in dealing with the issue is quite evident," he added.

"This attack is not a stray incident. Andhra Pradesh has been witnessing a series of incidents of temple vandalism for the past one and half years. Temple chariots in Bitragunta were found gutted in February, Antarvedi in September, and desecration of several Hindu idols at Pithapuram in January are some of the prominent malicious acts reported last year. In the past one and half years, as many as 120 attacks have taken place on temples. These attacks appear pre-planned," he said.

State gave land to Centre's RAF unit, says Kumaraswamy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"IT is highly condemnable that even the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister who were present on the occasion chose to ignore dignity and honour of our land and its language," Kumaraswamy said in a series of tweets.

"The behaviour of Mr Shah who has ignored Kannada in the process of providing prominence to English and Hindi indicates anti-Kannada attitude. It is an insult to the pride of Kannadigas. It is Karnataka that has given land for the Centre's RAF unit," he added. Congress leaders like Jayanagar MLA Sowmya Reddy too called it an attempt by the State Government to facilitate the imposition of Hindi.

> The behaviour of Mr Shah who has ignored Kannada in the process of providing prominence to English and Hindi indicates anti-Kannada attitude. It is an insult to the pride of Kannadigas
>
> HD Kumaraswamy, former CM

Kannada activists, however, rejected Kumaraswamy's "three-language policy" claim and demanded amendments to the Constitution to accord 'Official Language' status to all Indian languages.

"Article 343 states that Official Language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script. Why only Hindi? Amend Article 343 and make all Indian languages recognised under 8th Schedule as Official Language. Article 351 states that the duty of the Union is to promote the spread of Hindi Language. Why only Hindi? Even we Kannadigas also pay tax, actually more tax! Amend Article 351 and promote Kannada also, if not stop collecting tax from Kannadigas," said Arun Javgal, state organising secretary of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike.

Will check people flouting norms, says Mysuru DC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

WHEN people violating Covid protocols were brought to the notice of Deputy Commissioner Rohini Sindhuri, she said that she would check and take appropriate steps.

Health experts say that a Covid-19 vaccine doesn't mean a swift end to wearing masks or maintaining social distancing. They suggest continuing wearing masks as it acts as a fabric vaccine, but many in the region are turning a deaf ear to it. The failure of agencies to properly enforce and fine the violators is also one of the reasons for people violating the Covid norms.

"As soon as the vaccine drive began for frontline workers, people seem to have thought that they didn't have to wear masks anymore. They must follow all norms until the vaccine is administered to all and there is herd immunity and until the government declares that the country is Covid-free," said an expert.

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **K.M. SHIVAKUMAR, S/o Munigangappa**, aged 35 years, residing at #642, 2nd Main, 2nd Cross, Gavipuram Layout (Behind Govt. Press Layout), Ullhal Road, Jnanabharathi, Bangalore-560056, have changed my name from **SHIVAKUMAR .M to "K.M. SHIVAKUMAR"** vide affidavit dated 06/01/2021 sworn before Notary **H K Gopalagowda,** at Bangalore.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, K. G. SUBBBARAMMA SETTY, Son of Late. Komarla Ganga Setty, aged about 90 years, residing at #172, 4th Floor, Kavi Lakshmeesha Road, Bengaluru- 560 004. I state that my correct name is **K. G. SUBBARAMA SETTY** as per PAN Card No. ACGPS0517G, but as per MRF Limited my name is mentioned as **K. G. SUBBARAMA SETH** which is wrong but both the names are one and the same, and belong to me only, vide this affidavit sworn before Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, (OLD NAME) RAM SINGH, S/o. Hari Singh, residing at No. 20/1, Near Canara Bank, Ashwath Nagar, RMV 2nd Stage, Bengaluru-560094, have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) RAM SINGH** to **(NEW NAME) RAM SINGH BAGHEL** vide affidavit Dated 10/09/2020 sworn before Notary R. Shivannachari, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **PRASHANTH PALAMAND**, S/o. Rajashekar Palamand, aged about 41 years, residing at No. 6, N.S. Iyengar Street, Sheshadripuram, Bengaluru - 560 020, have changed my daughter's name from **RACHNA PRASHANTH** to **RACHNA PALAMAND** vide affidavit dated 16-01-2021 sworn before Advocate & Notary V. Srinivasa Reddy, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SANVIKA V.**, W/o. B.S.S. Adithiya, Aged about 26 years, resident of No. 117/2, Nagaraja Layout, Bull Temple Road, Bangalore - 560 019, have changed my name from **JEEVIKA V.** to **SANVIKA V.** vide affidavit dated 13.01.2021 sworn before Advocate & Notary Mamatha N.K., Bangalore.

QuoteExpress
IT ALWAYS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL IT'S DONE
NELSON MANDELA

kotak Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited

Regd office: 27BKC, C 27, G Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai – 400 051
Corporate office: Kotak Infiniti, Bldg No 21, Infinity Park, General AK Vaidya Marg, Malad (E), Mumbai – 400 097 www.kotak.com

AUCTION - NOTICE

That the below mentioned Borrower/s had availed gold loan facility against security of the gold ornaments/ items, as specified below. The Borrower/s defaulted in due repayment of the instalments and outstanding dues and as a result of which the Bank was constrained to issue notices calling upon the Borrower/s to repay the outstanding amounts. However, the Borrower/s has failed to repay/clear his outstanding dues thereby compelling the Bank to auction the gold ornaments pledged in favour of the Bank.

The auction of the below mentioned gold ornaments would be held at :- Respective Branches

Date: 29.01.2021 Time: 11.00 AM

Apac	Account No	Borrower Name	State	Location	Branch	Gr. wt (Gms)
GLN1541242	GLN1541242	Kalaiselvi K T	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	33.56
GLN1851104	GLN1851104	Prashanth .	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	40.13
GLN1609040	GLN1609040	Navin Vandakudari	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	44.66
GLN1778878	GLN1778878	Rajashekar B C	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	71.39
GLN1543746	GLN1543746	Sharanappa V Kalagi	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	30.27
GLN1856316	GLN1856316	Manjunath M M	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	15
GLN1843831	GLN1843831	Manjunath M M	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BASAVSWRNR	32.29
GLN1760342	GLN1760342	Alagappan K	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	47.4
GLN1795494	GLN1795494	Alagappan K	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	16.06
GLN1778077	GLN1778077	Satheesha S	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	83.68
GLN1846699	GLN1846699	Shobha N	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	58.92
GLN1847555	GLN1847555	Shobha N	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	139.73
GLN1758052	GLN1758052	Yuvaraj Bazari	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	75.03
GLN1788736	GLN1788736	Ramachandra S	Karnataka	BANGALORE	BSANKARI	10.51
GLN1706250	GLN1706250	Siripireddy	Karnataka	BANGALORE	DEVASANDRA	130.8
GLN1854835	GLN1854835	S Subash Chander	Karnataka	BANGALORE	FRAZERTOW	128.36
GLN1638477	GLN1638477	S Subash Chander	Karnataka	BANGALORE	FRAZERTOW	41.71
GLN1761768	GLN1761768	Syed Shabaz D	Karnataka	BANGALORE	FRAZERTOW	147.06
GLN1799600	GLN1799600	H Jagadish	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	56.85
GLN1475181	GLN1475181	Ashokkumar Ranganathgowda Bittugondanahalli	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	68.83
GLN1851529	GLN1851529	R Chethan	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	312.36
GLN1855537	GLN1855537	R Chethan	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	49.45
GLN1554194	GLN1554194	R Chethan	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	54.38
GLN1845158	GLN1845158	Madhu Chandra R	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	156.46
GLN1852457	GLN1852457	Madhu Chandra R	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	77.71
GLN1852476	GLN1852476	Madhu Chandra R	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	280.38
GLN1802583	GLN1802583	Pandian .	Karnataka	BANGALORE	INFANTRYR	45.94
GLN1775369	GLN1775369	S C Jayaswamy	Karnataka	BANGALORE	JAKASANDRA	253.16
GLN1822888	GLN1822888	Rasmitha Dash	Karnataka	BANGALORE	JPNGR2	218.49
GLN1415151	GLN1415151	Suraj M K	Karnataka	BANGALORE	JPNGR2	59.78
GLN1776505	GLN1776505	Suraj M K	Karnataka	BANGALORE	JPNGR2	62.7
GLN1843788	GLN1843788	N Ashok Kumar	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KAMNHALI	74.83
GLN1856600	GLN1856600	Ravi K R	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KAMNHALI	114.57
GLN1351188	GLN1351188	Ramanjaneyulu E	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KRROAD	24.49
GLN1404181	GLN1404181	Vivek A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KRROAD	88.16
GLN1463862	GLN1463862	Vivek A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KRROAD	121.23
GLN1618191	GLN1618191	Vivek A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KRROAD	160.22
GLN1759371	GLN1759371	Vivek A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	KRROAD	42.72
GLN1792400	GLN1792400	C Kishor	Karnataka	BANGALORE	MALESWARA	97.67
GLN1709808	GLN1709808	Shreedhar V Hegde	Karnataka	BANGALORE	MALESWARA	19.07
GLN1579740	GLN1579740	Mohamed Riyaz Ahamed	Karnataka	BANGALORE	MALESWARA	26.43
GLN1682157	GLN1682157	Ajaz Ahmed Khan	Karnataka	BANGALORE	MALESWARA	316.74
GLN1686349	GLN1686349	Priyathama Behera	Karnataka	BANGALORE	RTNAGAR	23.5
GLN1784149	GLN1784149	Syed Nadeem Pasha G	Karnataka	BANGALORE	RTNAGAR	63.2
GLN1599730	GLN1599730	N Ashok	Karnataka	BANGALORE	RTNAGAR	164.7
GLN1850344	GLN1850344	Priyathama Behera	Karnataka	BANGALORE	SADASHIVA	11.36
GLN1401440	GLN1401440	S Rajamanikyam	Karnataka	BANGALORE	THIPASANDR	60.8
GLN1667233	GLN1667233	Nirmala A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	THIPASANDR	41.2
GLN1673903	GLN1673903	Nirmala A	Karnataka	BANGALORE	THIPASANDR	65.9
GLN1663987	GLN1663987	Riyazur Rahman	Karnataka	BANGALORE	THIPASANDR	266.4
GLN1774821	GLN1774821	Riyazur Rahman	Karnataka	BANGALORE	THIPASANDR	263.46
GLN1800259	GLN1800259	Maqsood Pasha	Karnataka	BANGALORE	VIJAYANAGA	68.29

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EDITORIAL

"Peace is not brought about through conflict, but through compassion—creating peace of mind within ourselves. We all need compassion and women can take a lead role in bringing this about

Dalai Lama

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

CONG A BYSTANDER AS SENA PUSHES ITS HINDUTVA AGENDA

Time was when the Shiv Sena showed deference to the Congress led by Sonia Gandhi, desperate as it was to lead a government in Maharashtra to keep the BJP, the single largest party, out of power. It used NCP patriarch Sharad Pawar to open a talks channel with Sonia, whose animosity towards the Sena was mutual. But as their aim to put down the rampaging BJP took precedence, the three parties formed a power-sharing alliance led by the Sena's Uddhav Thackeray with the clear understanding of governance based on a common minimum programme (CMP). Weeks later, the Congress began grumbling that it had little say in the government, but it is now clear that the Sena has reduced the Grand Old Party to a doormat. Its Hindutva agenda is back on the front burner, with the party activating its proposals to rename Muslim dominated districts Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar (after Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's son) and Osmanabad as Dharashiv. Despite the Congress screaming that the renaming spree is not part of the CMP, Sharad Pawar appeared to be an embodiment of Gautama Buddha as he pronounced that nomenclatures don't matter. Clearly Pawar was on the decision loop, so the criticism that the Congress is an insignificant appendage to what is essentially a Sena-NCP government is quite valid. When Sena megaphone Sanjay Raut criticised Rahul Gandhi and made the case for Sharad Pawar as UPA president, not many sparks flew, indicating the moribund state of the Maharashtra Congress unit. Uddhav justified the renaming of districts, saying the present ones were coined by Mughal tyrant Aurangzeb, who doesn't fit in with the definition of secularism the CMP is wedded to. Interestingly, there has been little reaction from Left-liberals yet.

The Congress appears to be caught between two stools as any precipitate action would bring the BJP back in the reckoning. The Sena knows it fully well and is trying to squeeze out the BJP, as the latter's growth came at the expense of the former. It is also inducing defections from all around. As for the astute Pawar, his party shares the Congress' ideological space, so the latter's shrinkage ought to work to his advantage. It's a win-win situation for the Sena-NCP.

HIGH ON POPULISM, LOW ON ECONOMIC SENSE

Borrow more and spend even more. It's a plan as good as any for Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac, and he knows his job. His Budget for 2021-22, filled with grand announcements and ambitious proposals while singularly lacking in plans to explore avenues for additional revenue generation, is how you make a political statement in the guise of laying the financial roadmap. If the intention was to create positive vibes around the state of the economy, camouflage the pandemic-induced gloom and spread the feel-good factor to aid his party in the coming Assembly polls, he has done his job. Not if the Budget is meant to be treated as an exercise to formulate sound financial plans for economic well-being and all-round development.

While the evidently populist measures—the increase in welfare pension and support price for some crops, the promise to create 20 lakh jobs and implement pay revision for government employees, and laptops at subsidised rates for students—will help contribute to the ruling LDF's pro-people image, proposals like the Knowledge Society programme as part of the digital push and three industrial corridors at ₹50,000 crore have lent a futuristic tone to what's essentially a political game plan. More was expected from Dr Thomas Isaac the economist in terms of proposals to stabilise the ailing economy and set it on the path of recovery and growth. Instead, what we saw was the politician finance minister delivering promises keeping the election in mind, with no real obligation to fulfil them given the political uncertainty.

The borrow-and-spend philosophy has increased Kerala's debt burden substantially. While the total outstanding debt has zoomed to 36.11% of the GSDP, the state is expected to spend ₹21,940 crore (15% of the revenue expenditure) on interest payments alone in the coming fiscal. The fiscal deficit has risen to 4.25% of the GSDP. While salary and pension payments already account for 43% of the revenue expenditure, the bill is set to mount with the pay revision. The Budget makes a perfect job of masking financial blues. Full of good news, it's a potent political document, delivered with intent. As a financial strategy, it's lacking on many counts.

India and Sri Lanka, if they have the will and determination, can convert the contested territory into a common heritage

RESOLVING THE FISHING DISPUTE IN PALK BAY

V SURYANARAYAN

Senior Professor (Retd), Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Madras

AMIT BANDRE

Three significant aspects of Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's recent visit to Sri Lanka need to be highlighted. First, the timely medical assistance to tackle the problems posed by Covid-19; second, New Delhi's hope that Sri Lanka "in its interest" should fulfil the aspirations of the Tamil community for equality and dignity in a united Lanka; and third, finding a durable solution to the travails of fishermen in the Palk Bay. My focus is on the third subject, which has eluded a solution for the past several decades.

The fisheries issue, according to Jaishankar, was discussed in the earlier Joint Working Group in an "open and candid manner". He also had a meeting with the Sri Lankan Minister for Fisheries Douglas Devananda. The outcome of the meeting is not known. The two countries are at present engaged in a "fire-fighting exercise". The Indian fishermen who get detained in Sri Lankan waters are released after a few days; the detained trawlers are also given back. Trawlers and fishermen are back in Sri Lankan waters the next day. What is required is not this sort of fire-fighting; it is essential to extinguish the causes of fire once and for all. It can be done only if New Delhi and Tamil Nadu recognise the fact that the fault lies with Tamil Nadu fishermen.

Fishermen throughout the world are no respecters of maritime boundaries; they move wherever the fish moves. It is a universal phenomenon; Sri Lankan fishermen poach into Indian and Maldivian waters; Indian fishermen enter Pakistani and Bangladeshi waters, and Japanese and Taiwanese trawlers roam around the world. The only way to find a solution is to change our mindset; we should adopt a new paradigm of thinking. I have been advocating that the two countries can, if they have the will and the determination, convert the contested territory into a common heritage.

The roots of the problem can be traced to the mid-1960s when India was facing a foreign exchange crisis. To boost exports, Indira Gandhi introduced trawlers to catch prawns. Prawns were a delicacy in Japan and Europe, and exports went up. But the introduction of trawlers had unfortunate consequences. First, fishermen became wage labourers; non-fishermen, including politicians, entered the fray and became trawler owners. Equally relevant, bottom trawling led to the destruction of marine life. The trawlers swept the sea bed clean. Since there was no fish on the Indian side, our fishermen began to enter Sri Lankan waters.

The protracted ethnic conflict was a godsend. Fishing was banned in Sri Lanka and many Lankan fishermen came to Tamil Nadu as refugees. They worked for the trawler owners and directed the trawlers to areas where there was an abundance of fish. When I visited Pesalai, a fishing village in Sri Lanka's Mannar district, the fishermen told me: "Sir, stay here tonight. Early in the morning you can see Indian trawlers 500 metres away from the shore." The fishermen in Neduntheevu told me that on the three days Indian fishermen fished in Sri Lankan waters, they did not go for fishing because their nets would be cut by the Indian trawlers. The trawlers also muddied the waters; as a result, when they fished the next day, they could not catch much fish. The fishermen argued, with justification, that if bottom trawling continued, there would be no marine life on the Sri Lankan side of the Palk Bay too.

> India and Sri Lanka are at present engaged in a 'fire-fighting exercise'. The Indian fishermen who get detained in Lankan waters are released after a few days; the trawlers are also given back. They return the next day. What is required is not this sort of fire-fighting; it is essential to extinguish the causes of fire once and for all

What must be highlighted is the fact that bottom trawling is banned in Sri Lanka. The recalcitrant Indian fishermen received solid support from both the DMK and AIADMK governments. During the ethnic conflict, the Palk Bay was the conduit through which the LTTE war machine was fuelled.

The DMK and the AIADMK were engaged in mutual mudslinging, each accusing the other of not protecting fishermen's interests. A chief minister even went to the extent of demanding the retrieval of Kachchatheevu by peaceful means, if possible, and by force if necessary. What the politicians in Tamil Nadu do not realise is the fact that if the Sri Lankan government approaches the International Court of Justice against India, the image of our country, especially TN, would take a nosedive.

The success of diplomacy consists of converting a crisis into an opportunity. New Delhi must embark on deep-sea fishing in a big way. Tamil Nadu fishermen must be encouraged to take to deep-sea fishing. According to specialists, trawlers could, with some modifications, be converted to small fishing boats catering to the mother ship in the mid-sea. Simultaneously, the trawlers must be withdrawn from the Palk Bay. With trawlers out of the scene, a conducive atmosphere would be created. A Palk Bay Authority, consisting of specialists from both governments, representatives of fishermen's associations and navies should be constituted to determine ideal sustainable catch, how to enrich the sea jointly, the type of fishing equipment that can be used and the number of fishing days for each country. Let Sri Lankan fishermen fish for three days and Indian fishermen fish for three. The Palk Bay is increasingly becoming a conduit for drug traffic and there could be joint naval cooperation for tackling this menace. Thus the Palk Bay could be transformed from a contested territory to a common heritage, which it was for several centuries.

(The author was the Founding Director of the Centre in the University of Madras)

(suryageeth@gmail.com)

INDUSTRY-FRIENDLY AP NEEDS CENTRAL ASSISTANCE

VIJAYASAI REDDY V

MP, YSRCP Parliamentary Party Leader and National General Secretary

The environment created for the state of Andhra Pradesh has made the industrial community sit up and pay attention. If today the industrial giants are looking at this state as a potential investment destination, it is only because of its dynamic chief minister and his industry-friendly policies with swift implementation along with his clean and transparent governance. All we need is a little help from the Centre before the state reaches its self-propelling growth that no one can stop. With the third longest coastline of 975 kilometres, a proposed new smart capital, balanced regional development approach, hardworking vibrant educated population and forward-thinking leadership, Andhra Pradesh is raring to go.

By complying with all the 80 reforms (187 reform action points) contained in the Business Reform Action Plan 2019 released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and acquiring the first position in the Ease of Doing Business rankings, Andhra Pradesh under the leadership of CM Jagan Mohan Reddy has proved itself as the most-sought-after investment destination in India. The 12 reform areas where the state excelled include access to information and transparency, single-window system, land administration and transfer, land availability and allotment, environment registration enablers, construction permit and labour regulation enablers, obtaining utility permits, paying taxes, inspection enablers, contract enforcement (courts) and sector-specific measures.

Andhra, home to over 300 industrial parks, has a thriving industrial sector that grew by about 5.7% in 2019-20 due to its efforts to ensure actual ease of doing business with a low cost of starting an enterprise and quick single-desk approvals with 99.9% compliance. It was also the first state to announce a ₹1,100 crore restart package to bail out MSMEs after the impact of the pandemic. The restart package included the payment of all sanctioned but outstanding incentives to MSME units, a waiver of three months fixed demand charges for MSMEs, deferment of power minimum demand charges for three months for large and mega units, working capital loans and preferential market access for MSEs. This, along with schemes like Dr YSR Navodayam (one-time restructuring of MSME loans), is testimony to the state's commitment to industrialisation.

The YSRCP government also unveiled its Industrial Policy 2020-23 this year, which intends to provide world-class infrastructure, skilled labour and a zero-hassle setup for an industry-friendly environment. Aerospace and defence, food processing, pharmaceuticals, textiles, petrochemicals, electronics, automobiles, toys and furniture, footwear and leather, machinery and precision equipment are the areas identified as thrust sectors under the policy. With 70.9% of Andhra Pradesh's population in the working age, the second highest in India, one of the key objectives of the policy would be to involve as many people in these sectors as possible and develop their skills. This would significantly boost the state's economy, which is primarily agriculture-based. Further, it promises to provide end-to-end hand-holding of entrepreneurs via its 'YSR AP One'—a one-stop resource and support centre for industries.

While keeping in mind an equal growth of industrialists from SC and ST communities, the Andhra Pradesh government also launched the 'Jagananna YSR Badugu Vikasam' as part of its special industrial policy 2020-23. This includes special incentives of upto ₹1 crore, compulsory allotment of land in spaces belonging to the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation, waiver of stamp duty and concession in power charges, among others, for the SC and ST community industrialists.

> The AP government has been successful in providing an attractive regulatory environment for industries to flourish in the state. What is now left is the much-required assistance from the Centre by according it special category status

Additionally, the state government has also decided to conduct Samagra Parishrama Survey 2020 (comprehensive industrial survey) to capture industry requirements in order to understand the need for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour across various sectors. The primary objective of the survey would be to identify gaps in the supply chain of the industrial units and bridge them by providing skilling and reskilling programmes as per National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) standards.

The above efforts and rankings provide a holistic picture of the preparedness of Andhra in becoming a major industrial centre of India. The YSRCP's efforts tell a story that the state government has been successful in providing an attractive regulatory environment for industries to flourish in the state. What is now left is the much-required assistance from the Central government by giving the Special Category Status (SCS) to the state. Andhra Pradesh has been reeling under dual pressure. The significant loss of revenue due to its bifurcation in 2014 leading to the loss of the capital Hyderabad and the negative impact of the pandemic on the economy of the state have pushed the financial position of Andhra to a precipice. Thus, the demand for special category status for Andhra Pradesh becomes more pronounced in this time. To name a few benefits the SCS would accord to Andhra—it would get special Central assistance grants, assistance for externally aided projects being given as 90% grants (as opposed to loans, for others), excise duty concessions and tax breaks to attract industry to its territory. This precisely is the need of the hour for AP, which has proved itself in all reform action points listed by the Centre. A state that has worked tirelessly to achieve the same must be rewarded by helping it attract industries via special category status. Besides, unlike the restrictions that were faced during the 14th Finance Commission, the 15th Finance Commission has given a free pass to the Central government to grant SCS to any state. The Finance Commission in its report has stated: "Some states have requested special category status. This does not constitute part of the mandate of the 15th Finance Commission and remains entirely in the domain of the Union government, which can take an appropriate decision." Thus, this helps the case of granting a SCS to Andhra Pradesh that, with its continuous efforts, would help India reach its pinnacle in industrial growth.

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MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Vaccine banner war

On the one hand, the PM says the credit for developing the vaccines goes to the scientific community. On the other, the ruling TRS and opposition BJP are involved in a political slugfest, putting up banners with images of the CM and PM in Telangana. The government has purchased the vaccines with taxpayers' money and not from party funds.

N Nagarajan, Secunderabad

Politics, this time over jabs

Had the parties now in the opposition been in power, the sparring over the indigenously developed Covaxin would have been initiated by the BJP. That is the crux of the issue.

C G Kuriakose, Kothamangalam

Welfare of all sections

The Kerala Budget is welcome as it provides a lot of opportunities. Various schemes have been included to focus on the welfare of all sections. The government should implement them all.

Anugraha Asok, Chunakkara

Where is the money?

When governments are experiencing a severe financial crunch due to Covid, an increase in the salaries of government employees, besides various measures requiring huge funds outlay, raises questions about where the money will come from. One would have expected the finance minister to be more realistic due to the limited resources at hand.

Capt Mathai Raju (Retd), Kochi

Dump false pride

This is with reference to *Anatomy of an agitation* (Jan 17). The author has dissected the ongoing farm agitation and laid threadbare the intricacies. The government should not harden its stance and the farmers must not allow the agitation to be hijacked by vested interests. The need of the hour is dumping false pride and engaging in productive negotiations.

Biju C Mathew, Thiruvananthapuram

Dominance of corporates

This is with reference to *The wonder that's the Indian farmer* (Jan 17). The government should ensure that we do not fall prey to big corporates.

Narayani Potrivel, Mayiladuthurai

Ball in farmers' court

Even after nine rounds of talks between the Centre and farmers, an agreement remains a pipe dream. Since the Centre is ready to make changes in the laws, the ball is now in the farmers' court.

B Nagalingam Pillai, Thazhakudy

Trust our professionals

This is with reference to *Greed galaxy of MBAs ruin economy* (Jan 17). Our PM and his government, vociferous advocates of Atmanirbhar, should value the assessments of our own professionals instead of depending on the ratings of MNCs. Such firms utilise the services of our professionals and pay them a pittance while charging astronomical sums.

R Sriramprasad, Bengaluru

MBA degree craze

The author has rightly highlighted the Indian obsession for Western MBA degrees. Such courses are not suited for the Indian context. It is a pity that even political parties lack direct contact with voters these days and look to foreign MBAs to plan their success strategies.

S Nallasivan, Tirunelveli

Law not the same for actor?

This is with reference to *Vijay Sethupathi says sorry for his 'Naanum Rowdy Dhaan moment'* (Jan 17). When others are arrested for cutting a cake with a machete, there is no reason why the actor should be treated differently for the same offence.

P G Menon, Chennai

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TWEETS OF THE DAY

Dilip Ghosh @DilipGhoshBJP
If coronavirus vaccines were taken by some Trinamool Congress leaders, there would be a shortfall

Omar Abdullah @OmarAbdullah
The PM is saying 5G is coming in India while we are deprived of 4G. May he come and live here, see how we are living with 2G

Randeep Surjewala @rssurjewala
Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP government need to answer...Who will get free corona vaccine? How many people will get the free corona vaccine?

'One-fourth of population may be already infected'

Survey suggests over hundred million were infected by September

RICHA SHARMA @New Delhi

AS India launched the world's largest immunisation exercise, a country-wide sero surveillance report says about quarter of the Indian population is possibly already Covid infected and that could be behind the declining number of fresh positive cases.

The aggregate seropositivity of 10.14 per cent suggest that over a hundred million Indians were infected by September, primarily in larger cities, but infection is also rapidly spreading all over the country, said the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's assessment which roped in over 40 labs and centres across 24 cities.

"By September 2020, there were likely more than a hundred million infected and recovered Indians with effective neutralising antibodies with a life of six months or more. (It is) probably two-three times of that by now," said Anurag Agarwal, director, CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology.

About 10,427 adult individuals working in CSIR laboratories and their family members based on voluntary participation were assessed for the presence of antibodies for over six months.

Using seropositivity as a surrogate for infection, the study in pre-prints found that use of private transport, lower-exposure occupations, smoking, vegetarianism and A or O blood groups appeared to be protective. Anti-body levels were mostly stable at three months, but started to decline by six months although the levels were still above the detection threshold.

By September last year, the survey says, there was a wide

but uneven spread of the pandemic with the infection subsequently growing more rapidly in regions with low sero-positivity.

"We find that large cities have high sero-positivity rates, consistent with local surveys, but the majority of India continues to have low to moderate sero-positivity. Most sero-positive individuals had occupational exposure risk and significant symptoms were recalled by only 25 per cent, with 75 per cent recalling no symptoms at all," the report says.

As many as 1,058 individuals had antibodies against Covid. After three months, the report says, a follow-up on 346 seropositive individuals revealed stable to higher antibody levels against the infection but declining plasma activity for neutralising the virus. Majority of sero-positive individuals (75 per cent) did not recall any symptoms, the report says.

"Such information is invaluable towards a well-informed vaccination programme, especially in a setting where shortages are expected. Although India has been among one of the most affected nations in this SARS-CoV2 pandemic, such data is not yet available."

2.2L jabs, 447 adverse events by day-2 end

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE second day of Covid-19 vaccination saw over 17,000 people getting their first shot across six states. According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 17,072 people were vaccinated across Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, and Tamil Nadu.

By Sunday evening, 2,24,301 people had been inoculated, of whom 447 reported adverse events following immunisation but only three required hospitalisation, the ministry's Additional Secretary Manohar Agnani said. Most of the adverse effects reported so far are minor like fever, headache, and nausea. While two Delhi patients have been discharged, one person is under observation at AIIMS Rishikesh.

Agnani said a meeting was held with all states and UTs on Sunday to review the progress of the drive, identify bottlenecks, and plan corrective actions. Saturday's was "the highest day-one vaccination number (2,07,229) in the world. The figures are higher than the US, UK, and France", he said. Most states have also put out a clear weekly schedule for Covid vaccine delivery so as not to disrupt their routine health services. Barring Andamans (three days) and Andhra (six days), a majority of the states, including Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Telangana, opted for a four-day schedule.

Bahujan Samajwadi Manch takes out a march in support of agitating farmers at Ghazipur in New Delhi | PTI

Farmers say tractor rally on, govt says don't be stubborn

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi/Chandigarh

THE protesting farmer unions on Sunday announced to hold a 'peaceful' tractor parade in Delhi and other states on January 26 even as the Centre appealed to them to shun their "stubborn" stand on repeal of farm laws.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, at its meeting at the Singhu border, decided that 'Kisan Tractor Parade' will be carried out at an approximately 47-km stretch on the Outer Ring Road in Delhi, but there will be no disruption of the Republic Day celebrations. Similar tractor parades will also be held in various state capitals.

Each and every vehicle participating in the January 26 march will bear a Tricolour and a flag of the respective farmer union, but no political party flag will be allowed. The farmers have urged the Delhi and the Haryana Police not to stop their parade.

The announcement came even as the Centre made it clear once again that it was ready to consider all other options "seriously and with an open heart", except the demand for repealing the laws.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar asked the farmer unions to discuss the laws clause by clause at the next meeting and tell the Centre what amendments they wanted.

"Now that the Supreme Court has stayed the implementation of these laws, there is no question of being stubborn," Tomar said and asserted that the government had agreed to address their apprehensions regarding mandis and traders' registration, among other things. The government has also agreed to discuss laws on stubble burning and electricity, but the unions still refused to budge from their demand and only want the repeal of the laws.

"When the government enacts a law, it is for the whole country. Most of the farmers, scholars, scientists and people working in the agriculture sector agree with these laws."

Now that the Supreme Court has stayed the implementation of these laws, there is no question of being stubborn

Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Agriculture Minister

Tough road ahead for Pesticides Bill

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

EVEN as the deadlock over the new farm laws is showing no sign of abating, the government is staring at another difficult negotiation over the Pesticides Management Bill (PMB) as an umbrella organisation has voiced concerns over various clauses of legislation.

The Crop Care Federation of India (CCFI), a unified body comprising of more than 50 Indian manufactures, has expressed concerns over at least 15 clauses in the Bill and want it referred to committee to hold discussions on them.

The PMB was introduced in Rajya Sabha in March 2020 to replace the 1968 Act. An unsuccessful attempt to replace the 1968 Act was made in 2008 as well.

Ajit Kumar, Chairman of the technical Committee at CCFI said that the Bill is a setback to Atmanirbhar Bharat as it does not allow for the manufacture and export of pesticides which are not registered for use in India but are approved in countries like the US, Europe and Japan.

"PMB should be amended to allow Indian manufacturers to manufacture and export such pesticides as this will generate employment opportunities and earn foreign exchange," he said.

"The Bill provides a opportunity for government to push its agenda of less government more governance. RC under the 1968 Act as well as under the proposed PMB is all powerful with a lot of discretion. Currently, RC gets to, among others, approve registrations of pesticides and also to review grant of those registrations.

UK invites PM Modi as chief guest to G7 meet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE UK has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the G7 summit to be held in Cornwall in June this year as the chief guest.

"UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson will use the first in-person G7 summit in almost two years to ask leaders, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to seize the opportunity to build back better from coronavirus, uniting to make the future fairer, greener and more prosperous," a British High Commission statement said.

The G7 grouping includes the world's seven leading democratic economies — UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the USA — and the European Union will discuss global issues like the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and open trade.

The statement also said the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson who cancelled his India visit due to the rising coronavirus cases in his country, is likely to visit India ahead of the G7.

Apart from India, Australia and South Korea have also been invited to the summit. The three countries have been invited as guests to 'deepen the expertise and experience around the table'.

"As 'pharmacy of the world', India already supplies more than 50 per cent of the world's vaccines, and the UK and India have worked closely together throughout the pandemic. Our Prime Ministers speak regularly and Prime Minister Johnson has said he will visit India ahead of the G7," the statement read.

Dubbed as the first in-person G7 summit in almost two years, the agenda set out by the UK is to seize the opportunity to build back better from coronavirus.

A decorated train halts at the Nizamuddin Railway Station during the launch of eight trains on Sunday | PARVEEN NEGI

More tourists flocking to Statue of Unity than Statue of Liberty: PM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday flagged off eight trains connecting Gujarat's Kevadia, where the Statue of Unity of Sardar Patel is located, to different regions of the country.

Modi said more tourists flock to the Statue of Unity than the Statue of Liberty in the US, adding nearly 50 lakh tourists have visited the former since it opened in 2018. He referred to the Dedicated Freight Corridor project as "an example of the way things functioned in our country in the past."

"A few days ago, I inaugurated a large section (of the Dedicated Freight Corridor). On this very important project, in eight years work was done only on paper. From 2006 till 2014, not even one km track was laid. Now, in the next few months, 1,100-km work will be completed," he said.

Modi also inaugurated three railway stations and a broad gauge lineconnecting Dabhoi to Kevadia, via video link on Sunday. The prime minister said this is possibly the first time that so many trains were flagged off at the same time for one destination.

With increased connectivity, over one lakh people will visit Kevadia daily in the near future, he said citing a survey. Unlike in the past...wide changes have been made in the railway system on many fronts, with the government's focus on self-reliance in railway manufacturing and technology being a big reason behind the change, he said.

Govt: Install water flow meters to avoid penalty

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

TO check misuse of ground water, the Centre has directed all users, including small scale industries, drawing groundwater to install water flow meters. Any withdrawal without digital meters will invite penalty for illegally using underground water, it said.

The Central Ground Watet Authority (CGWA) had issued Guidelines to control and regulate ground water extraction in India in September 2020.

It also called for installation of digital water flow meter having telemetry system.

The abstraction structure shall be mandatory for all users seeking No Objection Certificate and intimation regarding their installation shall be communicated to the Central Ground Water Authority withing 30 days of grant of the NOC through the web portal.

"All the project proponents/ users drawing ground water and seeking/having NoC shall have to mandatorily install tamper-proof digital water flow meters with telemetry on all the ground water abstraction structures within their premises," said latest directive from the CGWA .

It further says that All the micro and small enterprises drawing less than 10 cubic metre/day shall also be mandatorily required to install digital water flow meters on all ground water abstraction structures withing their premises. Such enterprises shall be subjected to randomised inspections.

"The aforementioned conditions need to be strictly followed by all the users and any groundwater withdrawal without the installation of tamper proof digital water flow meters and telemetry shall be constructed as illegal," it added.

EXPRESS READ

Hooch deaths: Main accused held in Chennai

Bhopal/Morena: The main accused in the January 11 Morena hooch tragedy in Madhya Pradesh which killed 24 people was arrested from Chennai on Sunday. The home of main accused Mukesh Kirar in Chhera village was also demolished as part of the action following the tragedy, Additional CS Rajesh Rajora said Kirar was held from Chennai, while Jaura SDM Neeraj Sharma confirmed that the accused's home had been brought down.

HP sees 77% voting in panchayat polls

Shimla: The first phase of Panchayati Raj elections in 1,228 gram panchayats in Himachal Pradesh were held peacefully with the overall percentage at 77.50 per cent, election officials said on Sunday. A total of 123 Covid-19 patients and isolation voters cast their votes by following the standard operating procedures. The highest voter turnout was 94 per cent in the gram panchayat of Rihada.

Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan dies at 89

MUMBAI: Renowned Indian classical musician Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan passed away at the age of 89 on Sunday afternoon at his residence here, his family said. Khan's daughter-in-law Namrata Gupta Khan told PTI that the veteran breathed his last at 12.37 pm at his Bandra home.

"He was fine in the morning... but during his massage he vomited. His eyes were shut and he was breathing slowly. I tried connecting to doctors but by the time they came, he had already died," Namrata said.

The musician was going to turn 90 on March 3.

Khan had suffered a brain stroke in 2019 that left one side of his body paralysed. Namrata also shared the news about Khan's death on her Facebook page.

Khan's last rites were performed at Santacruze Kabrastan in the evening.

Born on March 3, 1931 in Badaun in Uttar Pradesh, Khan was the eldest son in a family of four brothers and three sisters. *PTI*

Make financial details of PM-CARES fund public, urge retired bureaucrats

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

A group of retired bureaucrats has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking to make public the financial details of PM-CARES fund.

The signatories of the letter include for RAW chief AS Dulat, former health secretary K Sujatha Rao, Anita Agnihotri and SP Ambrose. The former civil servants, in the letter, have called the opacity of the fund as 'disturbing'.

"We have been keenly following the ongoing debate about the Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations, or PM CARES - a fund created for the benefit of people affected by the Covid pandemic. Both the purpose for which it has been created as well as the way it has been administered have left a number of questions unanswered. It is essential that the position and stature of the Prime Minister is kept intact by ensuring total transparency in all dealings the Prime Minister is associated with," the letter stated.

The PM CARES fund was initiated in March last year by the government with an aim to tackle the Covid pandemic.

It is believed that the fund received donations to the tune of over $1 billion within two months. However, controversies have marred the fund after the government refused to give details of the contributions.

In an RTI reply, the Centre said that the fund was owned and established by the government and the fund does not come under the purview of the Right To Information (RTI) as it gets its fund from private sources.

Both the purpose for which it has been created as well as the way it has been administered have left a number of questions unanswered
—Letter

EMPOWERMENT

Through an ambitious master plan, the state government in Bihar has decided to increase the representation of women to lead government departments. The plan is christened as 'Strong Women; Competent Women'

6 KILLED — RAJ BUS TOUCHED HIGH-VOLTAGE WIRE

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	31	16	Mumbai	32	23
Bhopal	30	15	Panaji	33	23
Jaipur	25	13	Patna	23	12
Amritsar	18	8	Lucknow	22	14
Chennai	29	20	Port Blair	31	25
Kolkata	25	17	Imphal	24	9
Srinagar	7	-4	Chandigarh	25	9

Curfew in parts of Bhopal over wall construction

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

SEVERAL communally sensitive localities in the Old City area of Bhopal have been put under curfew and prohibitory orders as a precautionary measure over the construction of boundary wall around a piece of land which was subject of a legal dispute between two communities.

As per informed sources, the security measures were imposed following a MP High Court order, which came in favour of RSS-associated Keshav Needam over a 30,000 sq ft land in Sindhi Colony area under Gautam Nagar police station.

The curfew was imposed in Hanumanganj, Tila Jamalpura and Gautam Nagar police station areas till further orders, while prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPc were put in place in 11 other police station areas of the Old City, including Shahjahanabad, Chhola Mandir, Nishatpura, Talaiya, Mangalwara, Ashoka Garden, Aishbagh, Jahangirabad, Station Bajaria, Berasia and Najirabad.

According to Bhopal Collector Avinash Lavania, there was a dispute between two communities over a piece of land in Sindhi Colony area, owing to which a Receiver was appointed by the court in the past.

"Now, the High Court has decided the dispute in favour of one of the parties and no Receiver has yet been appointed. Hence the party, in whose favour the matter was decided by the court, is constructing a boundary wall around the land. To ensure that there is no tension between the groups, prohibitory orders have been issued," Lavania said.

According to DIG-Bhopal Irshad Wali, "The security measures are put in place as we anticipate there might be some disturbance over the wall construction."

Congress, Left begin talks over Bengal seats

No agreement in first round of talks as Left Front rejects Cong demand for 130 seats; leaders say deal this month

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kolkata

THE Left Front (LF) and Congress, who have decided to contest the upcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal together, on Sunday held the first formal meeting to chalk out a seat-sharing formula. While the Congress wanted to field candidates in 130 out of 294 seats, the Left refused to agree to the demand.

LF chairman Biman Bose said two more meetings would be held and a seat-sharing deal would be finalised this month itself. "There is no misunderstanding between us. Even though we are yet to seal the deal, we will fight the election together to save the state from religious polarisation," said Bose. Congress state president Adhir Chowdhury, who refused to respond to the TMC's recent call to support it, said the LF has many partners and it needed time to discuss the issue with those parties.

Recently, the TMC gave a call to non-BJP parties to support it to decimate the BJP in Bengal. "If the LF and Congress are seriously anti-BJP, they should support Mamata Banerjee in her fight. She is the real face of secular politics against the BJP," TMC MP and spokesperson Saugata Roy had said.

Chowdhury, who never misses an opportunity to blame the ruling party for BJP's rise in Bengal, said, "We are not interested in supporting the TMC. The ruling party has been poaching our MLAs for last 10 years. If Mamata is serious in fighting the BJP, then she should join the Congress as it is the only national party to fight against communalism."

The LF and Congress wanted to strike a deal in 2019 Lok Sabha polls but their talks failed after the CPI(M) rejected the Congress demand for Raiganj seat. The LF and Congress had contested Assembly polls in 2016 in alliance. While the Congress bagged 44 seats, the LF had to satisfy itself with just 26. "In many seats, our candidates were not supported by Congress voters. This was why we faced debacle despite having a deal with the Congress," said a CPI(M) leader.

Left Front chairman Biman Bose (R) with Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury at a press conference after seat-sharing talks in Kolkata on Sunday | PTI

> **There is no misunderstanding between us. Even though we are yet to seal the deal, we will fight the election together to save the state from religious polarisation**— Biman Bose, Left Front chairman

Disenchanted Satabdi appointed to TMC committee

Amid speculations about Trinamool leader Satabdi Roy's defection to the BJP, the actor-turned-MP from Birbhum has been elevated as the vice-president of the ruling party's state committee. Meanwhile, Satabdi said she hoped to resolve her issues with the party soon.

Sena announces entry in Bengal polls to spite BJP

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

THE Shiv Sena has decided to contest the Bengal elections, its Rajya Sabha MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut announced on Sunday.

The decision — apparently aimed at damaging ally-turned-rival BJP — was taken at a party meeting head by Maharashtra Chief Minister and Sena president Uddhav Thackeray, he said.

Sources in the party said Raut would visit Kolkata and meet Sena cadre and decide how many and which of the total 298 seats can be contested.

Though the Sena is in alliance with the Congress in Maharashtra, it will be going solo in Bengal where the Grand Old Party is tying up with the Left.

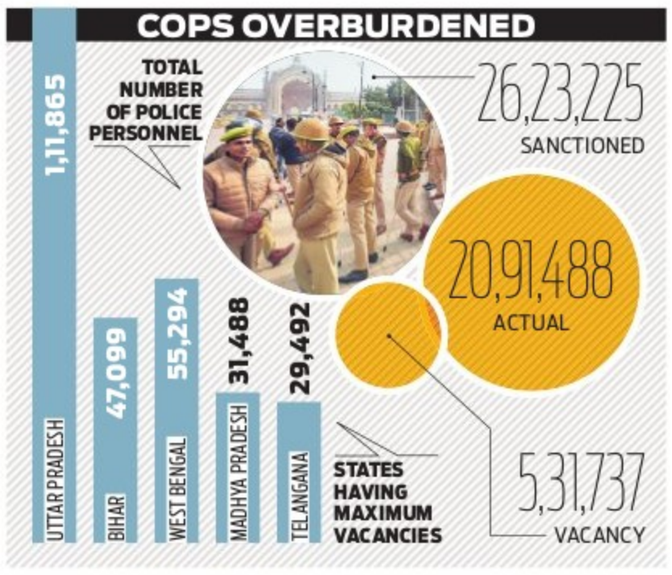
Sena sources said the leadership is well aware that it is unlikely to win any seat, but the intention is to split the 'Hindutva' votes to dent the BJP's chances of coming to power. "The Sena is likely to field candidates where the BJP is strong. It also plans to attract disgruntled leaders from the BJP," a party leader said. "Some sections of voters go with the local leaders. If the Sena gets strong local leaders, then, in a multi-cornered contest, its candidates can inflict heavy damage to the BJP even if they fetch small numbers of the votes."

UP, Bihar have maximum police posts lying vacant

KUMAR VIKRAM @ New Delhi

UTTAR PRADESH, Bihar and West Bengal top the list of States having maximum vacancies in police departments. As per the latest report by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), about 5.31 lakh posts, which is nearly 20 per cent of the sanctioned strength, are vacant at various levels in police departments across the country. Uttar Pradesh leads the list with 1.11 lakh vacant posts, which is nearly 27 per cent of the sanctioned strength of 4.15 lakh personnel.

Significantly, nearly 93 per cent of the total 5.31 lakh vacant posts belong to subordinate levels (Sub-inspector and below). The data showed that over 4.93 lakh vacancies are among lower level posts including sub-inspector, head-constable and constable. This is significant given the fact that these are the officials involved in policing at ground level.



Importantly, comparison of 2019 and 2020 data disclosed that vacancies have only increased over the years from 5.28 lakh in 2019 to 5.31 lakh in 2020.

Issues of overburdened police and long working hours have been raised in the courts many a time. While hearing a petition which claimed that law and order situation in the country was deteriorating due to a large number of vacancies in police services, the Supreme Court had observed in a August 2017 order that, "If police vacancies are filled up, it will help in dealing with several law and order problems. You need to fill up the vacancies and do the recruitment in a time-bound manner."

The BPRD report has also highlighted the disparity among states in the ratio between number of police personnel and population. While Bihar has the highest – one police official per 867 people, states like Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Haryana are at better positions with one police official per around 500 people.

West Bengal comes at second position with over 55,000 posts lying vacant against the total sanctioned strength of 1.53 lakh posts.

Higher number of vacancies in states like UP and Bihar are a cause for concern as these two states report a large number of crimes. The latest NCRB data has disclosed that UP tops the chart with a total 6.28 lakh cases while Bihar has reported 2.69 lakh cases.

VIOLENT POLITICS

Tripura Congress president Pijush Kanti Biswas suffered minor injuries after his vehicle was attacked allegedly by BJP workers in Sipahijala district on Sunday. The state Congress has called for a strike on Monday in protest | CREDIT: TRIPURA CONGRESS

DDC: Cong ready to shake hands with Gupkar parties

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THE Congress has extended olive branch to the Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) ahead of the formation of District Development Councils following the recently concluded DDC polls in the Jammu and Kashmir.

The Congress said it is ready to support the Gupkar Alliance on a "give and take" basis in forming the DDCs, to keep the BJP and Apni Party away from controlling the DDCs.

J&K Congress vice president Ghulam Nabi Monga told this newspaper that there is no question of his party supporting the BJP and Apni Party. In the DDC elections held for 280 seats, the PAGD had won 110 seats, BJP-75, independents-50, Congress -26, Apni Party- 12, JKNPP- 2, PDF-2 and BSP-1.

Monga said his party would be supporting the "secular forces" – PAGD in this case - in forming the DDCs. Asked whether the party is in touch with the PAGD, he said, "Till now, nobody has approached us. But we will definitely support secular forces to defeat communal forces."

There are 20 DDCs in J&K – 10 each in Kashmir and Jammu. BJP has wrested control of six DDCs in Jammu.

"We will extend support according to our need. We are hopeful of having our chairmen in Poonch, Rajouri and Kishtwar. We will be seeking their (PAGD) help in these three districts and wherever the other side has numbers, we can extend help," he said.

Sources in Congress said the party would help Gupkar Alliance in the Valley and would expect the Alliance to extend similar support in Jammu region.

EXPRESS READ

FIR against teacher for FB post on Modi

GUWAHATI: An FIR has been lodged against an Assam college teacher who allegedly defamed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other politicians by posting their "objectionable" photos on social media. One Snehangshu Chakraborty, who is a leader of the ABVP, lodged the FIR at Silchar Sadar police station against Tamojit Saha who teaches at a junior college. In the FIR, Chakraborty stated that Saha had posted an image on Facebook and captioned it "Impact of farmers' movement in Haryana". The post had alleged objectionable photos of PM Modi, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar and his deputy Dushyant Chautala. The police said they are probing the allegation.

NCP seeks JPC probe into Balakot air strike information leak

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

THE Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Sunday demanded a probe by a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) into the purported WhatsApp chats between Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami and former CEO of BARC Partho Dasgupta regarding the Balakot air strike three days ahead of the operation.

Alleging that Goswami received classified military information which he subsequently shared with Dasgupta, NCP minister and spokesperson Nawab Malik said, "This is a very serious matter concerned with national security. We will take up this matter to Parliament and demand the setting up of a JPC. There's a need to probe whether this classified information on Balakot airstrike by the Indian Air Force was only shared with Dasgupta or anyone else, including spies or enemies of India. There should also be a probe on who in the government shared this confidential information with Goswami."

The Maharashtra unit of the Congress, too, demanded an investigation.

Party leader and former chief minister Prithviraj Chavan tweeted that the Government of India must launch a thorough probe.

"Also the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence must take this matter with utmost priority. The voluminous transcript of Goswami's chats released by Mumbai Police is deeply disturbing," tweeted Chavan.

These chats formed a part of the 3,400-page additional chargesheet in connection with the TRP scam submitted by the Mumbai police on Monday last, but surfaced in the public domain on Friday

Meanwhile, the BJP distanced itself from the matter. "Someone saying or claiming something that does not mean it is true and we should not believe it also," state BJP chief Chandrakant Patil said.

> **This is a very serious matter concerned with national security. We will take up this matter to Parliament and demand the setting up of a JPC**— Nawab Malik, NCP minister and spokesperson

INDIA TRYING TO MALIGN US, SAYS PAK

NEW DELHI: Reacting to the leaked chats of Arnab Goswami, Pakistan on Sunday said the chats vindicated its stand that the Indian government was trying to malign its name.

"The recent revelation of transcripts in India further vindicates our consistent position that the RSS-BJP government stages "false flag" operations, maligns Pakistan with terrorism-related allegations and stokes hypernationalism in its bid to win elections," a statement from the Pakistan Foreign Office stated.

. "The transcripts also illustrate the unholy nexus between the 'Hindutva' regime and its cronies in the Indian media," the foreign office spokesperson tweeted from his official handle.

Refuting the allegations of the Pakistan Foreign Office, the Republic Media Network tweeted, "The desperation with which the Government of Pakistan has attacked the Republic Media Network in an open forum today, also lays bare the involvement of anti-India forces in the conspiracy behind the Republic Media Network."

Books worth ₹10 cr sold during book fair in city

Contrary to the perception, the recently held 33rd Guwahati Book Fair was a major success. Not only did it record a footfall of lakhs of people, books worth ₹10 crore were also sold at the 12-day event organised by the Publication Board Assam at the Assam Engineering Institute playground. On the last day on January 10, several book lovers came from different parts of the state. "The response we received was unbelievable. Not only books worth ₹10 crore were sold but a lot of people turned up," said Pramod Kalita of the Board.

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR
Our correspondent in Guwahati
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GUWAHATI DIARY

Pink buses for women, senior citizens

The state government has rolled out 25 pink buses, earmarked under the Bhraman Sarathi scheme, for women and senior citizens to travel within Guwahati. Flagging off the new buses, Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said this free transport service introduced for the first time in the city would immensely help women and senior citizens. He urged all commuters to take adequate care of these buses. Lauding the role played by the Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC), he said the bus service would give a new dimension to the state government's welfare measures in the new year. He further said during the pandemic, the ASTC buses had transported essential items, medicines, vegetables, fruits etc. within the Northeast and to other parts of the country.

IIT duo develops digital health system

Two IIT- Guwahati research scholars -- Mitali Basak and Shirsendu Mitra -- have been warded entry to the global Charm Health Innovation Challenge. The duo teamed up and submitted an idea of a bench-top digital setup to record initial screening parameters like body temperature, pulse rate, eye and tongue analysis of a patient remotely. The device developed by them is capable of doing primary health check-up. The winners of the challenge will be decided after submission of a prototype.

BJP flayed for claim on granting ST status

BJP national president ruffled the feathers of many in Assam with a statement that he made while flagging off the party's Assam poll campaign recently. He said the BJP government had granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to six communities of the state without snatching the rights of existing ST communities. The fact remains that the six communities in question have not yet been granted ST status. Opposition Congress slammed Nadda and the BJP for spreading "misinformation and lies". The BJP president had made the remark in Silchar in front of CM Sonowal. The statement made the six communities to step up the demand.

$7 bn

British meals delivery company Deliveroo said it is valued at, after raising $180 mn in a funding round

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	4	-6	SNY	Los Angeles	26	10	SNY
Colombo	30	22	TDS	Melbourne	22	14	LC
Dhaka	25	13	SNY	Moscow	-18	-19	LC
Dubai	28	16	SNY	New York	7	1	LC
Houston	18	15	LC	Singapore	31	23	LC
Istanbul	2	-4	LC	Toronto	1	-3	LC
London	8	7	LC	Washington	7	-1	LC

Two Afghan women judges assassinated, US blames Taliban

KABUL

GUNMEN shot dead two Afghan women judges working for the Supreme Court in an ambush in the country's capital Sunday, officials said, an attack the top US envoy in Kabul blamed on the Taliban.

Violence has surged across Afghanistan in recent months despite ongoing peace talks between the Taliban and government -- especially in Kabul, where a new trend of targeted killings aimed at high-profile figures has sown fear in the restive city.

The latest attack, which US Charge D'Affaires Ross Wilson blamed on the Taliban, comes just two days after the Pentagon announced it had cut troop levels in Afghanistan to 2,500, the fewest in nearly two decades.

The attack on the judges happened as they were driving to their office in a court vehicle, said Ahmad Fahim Qaweem, a spokesman for the Supreme Court.

"Unfortunately, we have lost two women judges in today's attack. Their driver is wounded," Qaweem told AFP.

There are more than 200 female judges working for the country's top court, the spokesman added.

Kabul police confirmed the attack, which no group has claimed so far.

Afghanistan's Supreme Court was a target in February 2017 when a suicide bomb ripped through a crowd of court employees, killing at least 20 and wounding 41.

The latest attack drew widespread condemnation, with Wilson blaming the Taliban directly as he called for an investigation.

"The Taliban should understand that such actions for which it bears responsibility outrage the world and must cease if peace is to come to Afghanistan," wrote Wilson on Twitter. *AFP*

ASIA MATTERS

PAKISTAN

Historic K2 team makes it back to base camp

The triumphant team of Nepali climbers who made history when they became the first to summit Pakistan's K2 in winter arrived safely back at base camp on Sunday, officials said. The 10 climbers reached the top of the world's second-highest mountain on Saturday, the last peak above 26,000 feet to be conquered in wintertime. "All the 10 Nepali climbers arrived in the base camp this afternoon. They are in good health and relaxing," Faizullah Firaq, a spokesperson for the Gilgit Baltistan government, told AFP. One of the successful climbers, Nirmal Purja, who is also known as Nimsdai, posted on social media: "The full team are now back... All safe and sound... It has been an overwhelming journey." Seven Summit Treks, a mountaineering company, said more climbers are still hoping to reach the top.

INDONESIA

Nearly 40,000 evacuated after floods: Authorities

Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated and more than a dozen have been killed in recent days in flooding on Indonesia's Borneo island. National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesperson Raditya Jati said floods brought by intense rains caused floodwaters as high as 10 feet. As of Sunday, 39,549 people had been evacuated and at least 15 had been killed due to floods that affected 10 districts and cities in South Kalimantan province on Borneo island. Separately, five people were killed and 500 others were evacuated after floods and landslides in Manado city.

SINGAPORE

Visitors to be tested for Covid-19 on arrival

All travellers, including Singaporeans and permanent residents, will need to take a COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test upon arrival in Singapore, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has announced. This will take effect from 11.59 pm on January 24 as part of tighter border measures to manage the risk of imported COVID-19 cases, reported the Channel News Asia. ingapore has seen an increase in the number of coronavirus cases, mostly imported or those arriving from other countries. The Ministry on Saturday confirmed four coronavirus cases from the community (or local), one from the dormitories for foreign workers here and 19 imported cases. he dormitory case is a 37-year-old Indian national who was detected through rostered routine testing on January 14.

Biden to blitz Trump legacy on 1st day

12 executive orders that include actions on economy & immigration planned, top aide says

WASHINGTON

US President-elect Joe Biden will deliver an appeal to national unity when he is sworn in Wednesday and plans immediate moves to combat the coronavirus pandemic and undo some of President Donald Trump's most controversial policies, his incoming chief of staff said Sunday.

Biden intends a series of executive actions in his first hours after his inauguration, an opening salvo in what is shaping up as a 10-day blitz of steps to reorient the country without waiting for Congress, aide Ron Klain said.

Klain told CNN's "State of the Union" that Biden, in his inaugural address to the nation, will deliver "a message of moving this country forward. A message of unity. A message of getting things done."

Biden will end Trump's restriction on immigration to the U.S. from some Muslim-majority countries, move to rejoin the Paris climate accord and mandate mask-wearing on federal property and during interstate travel. Those are among roughly a dozen actions Biden will take on his first day in the White House, incoming chief of staff Ron Klain said Saturday in a memo to senior staff.

US President-elect Joe Biden | AP

Other actions include extending the pause on student loan payments and actions meant to prevent evictions and foreclosures for those struggling during the pandemic.

Immigration law

Biden's decision to immediately ask Congress to offer legal status to an estimated 11 million people in the country has surprised advocates given how the issue has long divided Democrats and Republicans, even within their own parties.

Biden will announce legislation his first day in office to provide a path to citizenship for millions of immigrants in the United States illegally, according to four people briefed on his plans.

The president-elect campaigned on a path to citizenship for the roughly 11 million people in the U.S. illegally, but it was unclear how quickly he would move while wrestling with the coronavirus pandemic, the economy and other priorities. For advocates, memories were fresh of presidential candidate Barack Obama pledging an immigration bill his first year in office, in 2009, but not tackling the issue until his second term.

Biden's plan is the polar opposite of Donald Trump, whose successful 2016 presidential campaign rested in part on curbing or stopping illegal immigration.

If successful, the legislation would be the biggest move toward granting status to people in the country illegally since Ronald Reagan bestowed amnesty on nearly 3 million people in 1986. Legislative efforts to overhaul immigration policy failed in 2007 and 2013. *AP*

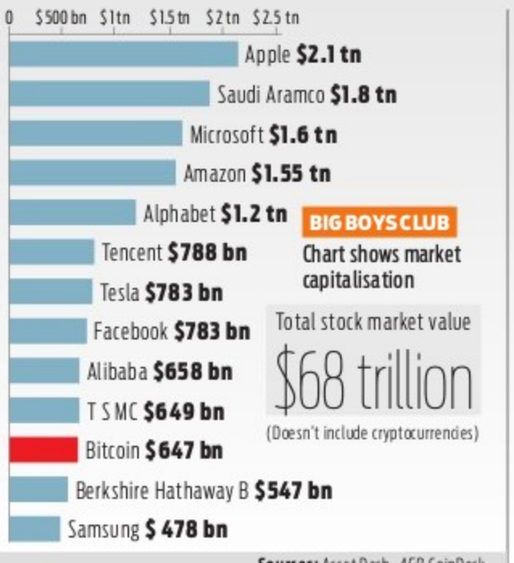
'No proof of murder plot by rioters'

WASHINGTON

US Justice Department investigators say they have not found any evidence yet that the rioters who ransacked the US Capitol last week intended to capture and kill any lawmakers.

In an Arizona court filing on Friday in the case of Jacob Chansley, federal prosecutors took back an earlier assertion that supporters of President Donald Trump planned to "capture and assassinate elected officials" in the January 6 siege of the US legislature.

The claim was made in arguments to prevent the court from granting bail to Chansley, aka Jake Angeli, seen in photographs bare-shirted wearing a headdress and carrying a spear inside the Capitol. *AFP*



Sources: Asset Dash, *AFP*, CoinDesk

Bitcoin's wild ride

After the latest wild ride took the poster child of cryptocurrencies above $40,000 before a stomach-churning plunge, the million dollar question won't go away: How much is bitcoin actually worth?

400% The virtual currency barrelled to new highs to rise more than 400% over the past year

20% Then it promptly slid some 20% to settle around $36,000

$146,000 bitcoin may be highly volatile but could go as high as $146,000 per unit, putting it in competition with gold as an asset class in terms of private sector investment. The market capitalisation of gold is worth over $10 trillion

■ The bulk of bitcoin investors are not day-to-day traders, but people making a long-term punt. The recent price boom has involved only 5 million units

Kamala picks Sotomayor for swearing her in

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will be sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor on Wednesday, a history-making event in which the first Black, South Asian and female vice president will take her oath of office from the first Latina justice. Harris chose Sotomayor for the task, as per a person familiar with the decision. She'll also use two Bibles for the swearing-in, one of which belonged to Thurgood Marshall, the first Black Supreme Court justice. *ABC* first reported these details.

20 INDIAN-AMERICANS PICKED FOR THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

US President-elect Joe Biden has nominated at least 20 Indian-Americans, including 13 women, to key positions in his incoming administration, a record for the ethnic community that constitutes just 1% of America's population

NOMINATIONS

- **Neera Tanden**, Director of Management and Budget
- **Dr Vivek Murthy,** US Surgeon General
- **Vanita Gupta,** Associate Attorney General Department of Justice
- **Uzra Zeya,** Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
- **Mala Adiga,** Policy Director to Jill Biden
- **Garima Verma,** Digital Director of the Office of the First Lady
- **Sabrina Singh,** White House Deputy Press Secretary
- **Gautam Raghavan,** Deputy Director in Office of Presidential Personnel
- **Vinay Reddy,** Director Speechwriting
- **Vedant Patel,** Assistant Press Secretary to the President
- **Sonia Aggarwal,** Senior Advisor on climate
- **Vidur Sharma,** Policy Advisor for Testing
- **Neha Gupta,** Associate Counsel
- **Reema Shah,** Deputy Associate Counsel

KASHMIRIS IN WHITE HOUSE

- **Aisha Shah,** Partnership Manager at the White House Office of Digital Strategy
- **Sameera Fazili,** Deputy Director at the US National Economic Council in the White House

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

- **Tarun Chhabra,** Senior Director for Technology and National Security
- **Sumona Guha**, Senior Director for South Asia
- **Shanthi Kalathil,** Coordinator for Democracy and Human Rights

Don't publish unnecessary nuclear details, Iran tells IAEA

TEHRAN

IRAN urged the UN nuclear watchdog to avoid publishing "unnecessary" details on Tehran's nuclear program, state TV reported, a day after Germany, France and Britain said Tehran has "no credible civilian use" for its development of uranium metal.

The report quoted a statement from Iran's nuclear department that asked the International Atomic Energy Agency to avoid publishing details on Iran's nuclear program that may cause confusion.

"It is expected the international atomic energy agency avoid providing unnecessary details and prevent paving ground for misunderstanding" in the international community, the statement said. It did not elaborate.

On Saturday, Germany, France and Britain pressed Iran to back off its plan to develop uranium metal, calling it "the latest planned violation" of its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. The goal of the deal is to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear bomb, something Iran insists it does not want to do.

"Iran has no credible civilian use for uranium metal," they said in a joint statement. "The production of uranium metal has potentially grave military implications." *AP*

Uganda oppn rejects Museveni's victory as fraud

KAMPALA

A day after Uganda's longtime leader was declared winner of the country's presidential election, the opposition party dismissed the results as "fraud" and called for the release of their leader, Bobi Wine, who has allegedly been under house arrest since polling day.

President Yoweri Museveni won a sixth five-year term, extending his rule to four decades, as per official results.

Uganda's military on Sunday continued to hold top opposition challenger Wine at his home, saying troops were there to protect him. Wine dismissed Museveni's victory as "cooked-up, fraudulent results" while his party urged the government to release him.

Soldiers patrol outside opposition challenger Bobi Wine's home in Kampala | AP

"We ask Ugandans to reject this fraud," the opposition party, the National Unity Platform, said in a statement Sunday. "This is a revolution and not an event. A revolution of this nature cannot be stopped by a fraudulent election."

The opposition party said that its "quest for a free Uganda is on despite the current attack on free speech and association," referring to the days-long shutdown of the internet by the government. The party urged its followers to use every "constitutionally available avenue" to pursue political change.

"As we speak now, our president (Wine) is under illegal detention at his home," opposition lawmaker Mathias Mpuuga, told reporters Sunday. He spoke at the headquarters of Wine's party in Kampala.

"Perhaps his crime was to defeat Mr. Museveni on the day he has selected as his crowning," he said. Wine "is not allowed to leave or receive visitors at his home." *AP*

Famous US music producer, murderer Phil Spector dies

LOS ANGELES

Phil Spector, the eccentric and revolutionary music producer who transformed rock music with his "Wall of Sound" method and who later was convicted of murder, has died at 81.

California prison officials said he died Saturday of natural causes at a hospital.

Spector was convicted of murdering actress Lana Clarkson in 2003 at his castle-like mansion on the edge of Los Angeles. After a trial in 2009, he was sentenced to 19 years to life.

Clarkson, star of "Barbarian Queen" and other B-movies, was found shot to death in the foyer of Spector's mansion in the hills overlooking Alhambra, a modest suburban town near Los Angeles.

Until the actress' death, which Spector maintained was an "accidental suicide," few residents even knew the mansion belonged to the reclusive producer, who spent his remaining years in a prison hospital.

Decades before, Spector had been hailed as a visionary for channeling Wagnerian ambition into the 3-minute song "Wall of Sound". *AP*

GIG ECONOMY

China tech industry under scrutiny after worker's self-immolation

HONG KONG

E-COMMERCE workers who kept China fed during the pandemic, making their billionaire bosses even richer, are so unhappy with their pay and treatment that one just set himself on fire in protest.

China's internet industries already were known for long, demanding days. With millions of families confined at home, demand surged and employees delivered tons of vegetables, rice, meat, diapers and other supplies, often aboard scooters that exposed them to sub-freezing winter cold.

For white-collar workers in the technology industry, pay is better than in some industries but employees are often expected to work 12 hours a day or more.

The human cost caught public attention after the deaths of two employees from e-commerce platform Pinduoduo, known for selling fresh produce at low prices. Their deaths prompted suggestions they were overworked. In an indication of high-level concern, the official Xinhua News Agency called for shorter work hours, describing long hours of overtime at the expense of employees' health as an "illegal" operation.

Food delivery workers outside a restaurant in Beijing | AP

Renewed concerns over dire working conditions for delivery drivers also came to the forefront when a video circulated on Chinese social media showing what it said was a driver for Ele.me, part of e-commerce giant Alibaba Group, setting himself on fire to protest unpaid wages.

The controversy is a blow to the image of internet industries that are transforming China's economy and generating new jobs. They have made some of the founders among the world's wealthiest entrepreneurs. During the heights of the pandemic, the fortunes of the biggest, including Alibaba founder Jack Ma and Pinduoduo founder Colin Huang, swelled as online consumer spending boomed.

In a video widely circulated on social media, 45-year-old delivery driver Liu Jin poured gasoline and set himself on fire outside a distribution station for Eleme in the eastern city of Taizhou, shouting that he wanted his money. *AP*

With government revenues trending lower and the need to provide a boost to India's industry, prospects for an income tax cut are low

BUDGET 2021: WHY YOU SHOULD NOT EXPECT MUCH

AMIT BANDRE

RAJAS KELKAR

THE Union Budget is usually associated with anticipation about tax relief. You want the government to reduce the burden on your income to plan your finances well. Be that as it may, this year, the government is in no position to oblige.

The Reserve Bank of India's recent Financial Stability Report projects a significant deterioration in the government finances. During April-November 2020, total receipts of the Union government shrunk by 17.9 per cent compared to the same period last year. It attributes this to Covid-19 related disruptions that caused a drop in tax and non-tax revenue.

The government, in the latest release, has projected India's growth to contract by 7.7 per cent in 2020-21. After shrinking for two successive quarters and 15.7 per cent in the first half of the financial year 2020-21, India's economy is in a recession (technically speaking). Raghuram Rajan, former RBI governor, said in a recent interview that the economy would take a couple of years to reach growth levels seen before the pandemic.

In this backdrop, the government's priority would be to boost growth. Last month, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the budget for 2021-22 would be one like none other. She was addressing industry captains at an event and invited them to put forward suggestions. The government is most likely to announce schemes to make India an attractive manufacturing destination. The idea is to make most of the global trade disputes involving China. Multinational companies are reportedly seeking alternatives to China.

The government may also focus on the banking sector. The RBI's Financial Stability Report reveals that the gross non-performing assets in the banking sector could see a sharp rise as borrowers fail to pay the interest or EMIs. In the first half of the year, the moratorium enforced ensured fewer such failures. However, with EMIs back in the monthly outgo of consumers, banks are gearing up for non-payment of interest or loans. The government may have to support the banking sector as a result.

The drop in tax and non-tax revenue means that the government would have to make some money available to finance a projected combined central and state government fiscal deficit of over 12 per cent. There are signs of a sharp recovery in the collection of GST. The latest data for December 2020 shows that the monthly collection of GST was the highest ever. A key factor to watch out for is buoyancy consistency in the monthly GST collection in 2021.

The other significant revenue source could be disinvestment. The government is keen to push through the initial public offering of the Life Insurance Corporation of India. This is likely to bring in a significant windfall to the government. A strategic sale of corporations such as Bharat Petroleum could help too. The government could quickly move to push through some transactions as benchmark indices hover around a record high. However, we have to keep in mind that the government has rarely met any disinvestment targets.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce in India, the industry body, has recommended pledging public sector shares with India's Reserve Bank to get ₹5,00,000 crore. It can be a loan issued at low rates near the repo rate. Some other recommendations include issuing long-term pandemic bonds—both in India and the international markets. Sovereign Gold Bond schemes could help India's households move away from physical gold and provide necessary resources to the government.

For India's economy to grow fast, there is a need for a boost to consumption as it accounts for two-thirds of the economic growth. However, sectors like aviation, hospitality, and retail are likely to witness a slow recovery. "Consumption demand and investments which is necessary to propel the economy would continue to be tepid and is unlikely to see a noteworthy improvement during the year," said CARE Ratings, a credit rating agency, in an analysis of India's growth data.

The pressure on the expenditure side of the budget is high as everyone expects the government to provide relief to ordinary citizens. The government may also incur significant expenditure on account of the nationwide vaccination to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides that, incentives to stimulate economic growth may take away resources. Under such circumstance, the government is unlikely to provide any cash handout or tax relief to individuals.

(The author is editor-in-chief, www.moneyminute.in)

MONEY-WISE

EMI TRAPS CREATED BY PARENTS

WHEN I say parents put kids in EMI traps, I mean the guys (my age!) born in the 1950s, 60s whose children have started earning and sadly turn to their parents for advice.

Well it happens like this...

A guy born in the late '80s starts earning. He first goes and buys a nice motorbike—and for that he is happily paying an EMI. Age 24 to age 27 years and the boy is happy about his purchase.

But when he gets the confirmation letter, the pressure starts. "You are earning so well, why do you not get married?". And at age 28 that pressure translates to marriage—arranged by elders, or sometimes by the youngsters themselves.

Now the EMI pressure starts "Will you take your wife with all that silk saree and jewellery in your bike?". To this, the father-in-law offers "Yes yes... When we were young, such good EMIs for cars were not available and I had to wait for the company car. It came at my age of 39" or something along those lines. I am not even saying that the boy did not want the car, but this nudge from the parent is just what the doctor ordered! So now the second EMI starts.

If the boy does not really want a car, well, the pressure then turns to blackmail when the girl gets pregnant. That is the last straw. He HAS to buy a car. So another EMI starts.

Then the collective ego of the whole society takes over. There is pressure to buy a house. Why should he buy a house? Because his father, father-in-law, and every uncle, aunt, will feel good. So suddenly the wife will also (brainwashed by 'society') say "When our kid is born, the kid should come to our own house". He is lucky, because some girls will get married only to a guy who has his own house. Luckily for the girls there is no such pressure—they need not own a house in such a hurry, but some of them do buy a house! So now one more EMI has got added on.

If he protests, the father will say 'I will put in ₹2,00,000 for the down payments." So a ₹75,00,000 house has been committed to. Down payment ₹7,50,000—dad pays partly, Husband and Wife clean out all their accounts and the 'house' has been bought. EMI? ₹67,000.

The guy's income of ₹1,34,000 is now eaten up 50 per cent by the housing EMI, ₹12,700 car EMI, society charges, etc, etc. The monthly surplus is about ₹1,348. and the wife's take home is about ₹65,000—which can be used for all other expenses!

The wife having connived with her parents (for the kid), and her in-laws (for the house) is ecstatic that they now have a baby on the way, a new car (it is so hot, how can people travel by bus and train, OMG), a new house). She goes to the gynaec—and he says, "It is better that you take rest, you are having complications"—this happens regularly, tell my doctor friends. She comes back and asks her husband very sweetly "Can I leave my job?". LOL. The guy has been had. He cannot even think of taking sick leave.

If he takes one day off, he cannot pay all his EMIs.

(Views are personal)

FINANCIAL ADVICE

PV SUBRAMANYAM

writes at www.subramoney.com and has authored the best seller 'Retire Rich - Invest ₹ 40 a day'

HOME INSURANCE

Bharat Griha Raksha to cover both structure, contents of property

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

TAKING forward its initiative to standardise insurance products available in the Indian market, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has issued guidelines on standard home insurance policies which are to be made available to customers from April 1.

Called Bharat Griha Raksha, the product is mandated to offer a standard cover to protect a house's structure and its contents. Like many other products in the series, the premium for this product will be decided by insurers. However, there will be certain standard clauses which will be common and have to be mandatorily provided by all insurers.

Standard Policy

Covers damage caused by fires, storms, cyclones, and other natural and man-made disasters

Sum insured to be based on the property's carpet area and cost of construction

As per the guidelines, the policy will pay for damages to the house's structure caused by both natural and man-made disasters. These include fires, storms, cyclones, typhoons, tsunamis, floods and even thefts, riots, strikes, and acts of terrorism. The sum insured will be based on the property's carpet area and the prevailing cost of construction as on the date the policy commences. The customer will also have the flexibility to choose their preferred tenure for the policy, which can vary from one to 10 years.

Besides the structure, the product will also cover appliances and furniture, up to 20 per cent of the cost of all sum insured, or up to ₹10 lakh in case the policyholder does not provide specific details on the items being claimed. In case the cost exceeds ₹10 lakh, customers will have to give a detailed break-up of the value of each product. Apart from this, insurers have also been asked to offer optional covers for jewellery and personal accident plans. An interesting feature of the policy is that it does away with the current practice of settling claims proportionately.

"If the sum insured declared by a policyholder is less than what ought to have been declared for the property in question, the policyholder's claim will not be settled proportionately, but up to the sum insured that is declared," the IRDAI's said. However the insurers said that they are still awaiting clarity on whether the regulator will allow for zone and geography-based pricing in case of disaster-prone areas.

Speculation on Budget announcements may turn markets volatile this week

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

SPECULATION over announcements that may be made in the upcoming Union Budget on February 1 may lead to some volatility in the domestic stock markets, even as most investors take their cues from the ongoing earnings announcements from India Inc for the third quarter (Q3FY21). News on the Covid-19 vaccine from around the world, and updates on the rollout in India, is also set to be an important driver for stock exchange indices.

"Going ahead, the market could be volatile given the ongoing earning season and the weak global cues. The run-up to the Budget would also add to the volatility," noted Siddhartha Khemka, Head-Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

Others note that as the earnings season unfolds, investors may be prone to making stock-specific decisions. A few major earnings announcements scheduled for this week include the Bank of Maharashtra, Bajaj Finance, Federal Bank, Asian Paints, Bajaj Auto, and Reliance Industries Limited.

"Along with the weak global market, this week, the domestic market will shift its focus on the banking and finance sector as major banks and NBFCs are to release their quarterly results," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

As India continues to roll out the vaccine, traders say that there may be swings in certain specific stocks. The first Covid-19 vaccine shots in India were given on Saturday to nearly two lakh frontline healthcare and sanitary workers. Trends in Brent crude prices, the rupee, and foreign investment patterns will remain key monitorables for investors.

TODAY'S STOCK PICK

VARUN BEVERAGES

Current Price ₹897

Target Price ₹1,100

We expect strong demand traction over the next few years due to: a) VBL being a monopoly play in PepsiCo India's business, b) rising penetration on the back of a robust distribution network, c) diversifying product portfolio, d) greater refrigerator penetration in rural/and semi-rural areas per household and higher power availability hours, and e) increasing discretionary spending per capita in the market.

Disclaimer: The views and recommendations made above are that of the individual analyst or broking company, and not that of *The New Indian Express*.

— Motilal Oswal Securities Limited

EXPRESS READ

Metropolis to acquire Hitech Diagnostic

New Delhi: Diagnostic chain Metropolis Healthcare on Sunday said it will acquire Dr Ganesan's Hitech Diagnostic Centre in a cash and stock combination deal—partly by way of a cash consideration of ₹511 crore and partly by issuance of up to 4,95,000 equity shares to the promoter group of Hitech Diagnostic.

BharatPe secures ₹139 crore debt

New Delhi: Fintech company BharatPe on Sunday said it has raised ₹139 crore (about $20 million) in debt from venture debt firm Alteria Capital and ICICI Bank, adding that these funds will be used to strengthen the company's lending business operations in India and provide credit to merchants on its platform.

FT's six shut schemes generate ₹13,789 cr

New Delhi: Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund on Sunday said its six shut schemes have received ₹13,789 crore from maturities, prepayments and coupon payments since closing down in April Franklin Templeton MF had shut the six debt mutual fund schemes on April 23, 2020 citing redemption pressures and lack of liquidity in the bond market. These schemes together had an estimated ₹25,000 crore as assets under management (AUM).

IRFC, Indigo Paints set to launch IPOs this week, may raise up to ₹5,800 crore

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

TWO companies—Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) and Sequoia Capital-backed Indigo Paints—are all set to hit India's initial public offering (PO) market this week. While IRFC's IPO is expected to raise up to ₹4,633.4 crore at the upper end of the price band, Indigo Paints' public issue is slated to fetch up to ₹1,170.16 crore. The two IPOs come at a time when the Indian stock markets have hit a peak.

According to documents shared by the companies, the three-day initial share-sale of IRFC would be open for public subscription between January 18-20, while Indigo Paints' IPO will open on January 20 and end on January 22.

IRFC's IPO comprises up to 178.20 crore shares—this includes a fresh issue of up to 118.80 crore shares and an offer-for-sale of up to 59.40 crore shares by the government. The price band has been fixed in the range of ₹25-26 per equity share and bids can be made for a minimum of 575 equity shares and in multiples of 575 thereafter.

IRFC, the dedicated market borrowing arm of the Indian Railways, has also said that it has raised ₹1,398.63 crore from 31 anchor investors ahead of its public issue. These investors have been allocated 534,563,007 equity shares at an upper price band of ₹26 per shares (which includes a premium of ₹16 per equity share).

Half of the issue is reserved for qualified institutional buyers, 35% for retail investors, 15% for non-institutional bidders, & 70,000 shares for employees

Indigo Paints

₹4,633 cr
Size of IRFC's IPO issue

₹1,170 cr
Size of Indigo Paints' IPO

On the other hand, the IPO of Indigo Paints comprises a fresh issuance of stocks aggregating to ₹300 crore and an offer-for-sale of up to 58,40,000 equity shares by Sequoia Capital, through its two funds—SCI Investments IV and SCI Investments V—and promoter Hemant Jalan. The price band has been set at ₹1,488-1,490 a share for its initial share-sale.

Half of this issue is reserved for qualified institutional buyers, 35 per cent for retail investors, 15 per /cent for non-institutional bidders, and there is a reservation of up to 70,000 equity shares for employees who may wish to subscribe, these will get a discount of ₹148 per equity share to the offer price.

Proceeds from the fresh issuance of shares will be used for the expansion of the company's existing manufacturing facility at Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu, for the purchasing of tinting machines and gyro shakers, and servicing borrowings, the company said.

India's IPO market performed exceptionally well last year even as the Covid-19 pandemic wrecked the economy. A total of 16 companies raised over ₹30,000 crore from investors in the calendar year 2020 as against ₹17,433 crore raised by 17 companies in 2019. In the new year 2021, nearly two dozen more companies are lined up to hit the capital markets with initial public offerings.

2020 underlines importance of staying prepared

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @Chennai

THE bygone year has been a tough one for most people around the world and has brought with it important lessons on the importance of being ready for emergencies. Because from sudden job losses to huge hospitalisation bills, 2020 had everything.

Experts say that taking a few lessons from 2020 is a key requirement for anyone looking to strengthen their financial security and stability.

According to experts, the first thing people should take note of is the advantage in having yourself covered by an insurance policy. Insurance is not only necessary to protect your dependents but also makes you better-prepared to deal with unforeseen expenditures.

Wealth advisors say that people should definitely opt for a health insurance policy to reduce the financial burden in case of a medical emergency and a term life insurance plan to ensure the security of their families.

After investing in insurance, it is important to create a liquid reserve to address contingencies. It is highly recommended to have an emergency corpus fund and experts say that breadwinners should ensure that they keep a corpus fund equivalent to at least six months of expenses.

Another important factor is to ensure that you don't have any major debt. While it is now quite easy to take a personal loan, experts say that it should be a last resort and people should generally avoid personal loans.

"It is wise to invest in a mix of assured-return and market-linked instruments which will help you to deal with a crisis situation in a better way, " said S Gopalan, a Chennai based wealth advisor, adding that people should also not rush to liquidate their investments.

Min to name new, upgraded SAI facilities after sports stars

The sports ministry on Sunday said it has decided to name all the upcoming and upgraded facilities of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) after renowned athletes who have brought accolades for the country. The initiative is meant to honour sporting heroes of the country, the SAI said. In the first leg, facilities in Lucknow, Bhopal, Sonepat and Guwahati will be named after local sports stars.

123 The seventh-wicket partnership between Shardul and Washington was worth 123 runs. It's India's biggest 7-th wicket stand in Brisbane ever

3 The partnership was just the third century partnership of the series and the second by an Indian pair after Rishabh Pant and Cheteshwar Pujara in Sydney

BRISBANE FAIRY TAIL

Shardul & Washington turn out to be unlikely heroes, hitting fifties to help India stay in tie

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN
@ Chennai

PAT Cummins has the ball in his hand. It's the start of the 68th over, his 18th of the innings. At the striker's end is Shardul Thakur, facing his 15th ball in Test cricket. As far as scene-setters go, this is a rookie facing a future Hall of Famer. It's pitched short and Shardul, who has honed his skills in India's dust balls, takes him on. With one swift motion, he rocks back, and hooks Cummins. It's the perfect connection and the ball sails over the boundary for six. A challenge has been accepted. At the other end, Washington Sundar, 21-ball into his Test career, applauds. Their nascent partnership is worth seven runs from four balls, they trail Australia by 176 more runs. And this is at 'The Gabba', the place where most overseas rookies die a silent death.

Nathan Lyon has the ball in his hand. It's the beginning of over No 104. It's his 100th Test, three short of 400 wickets. At the striker's end is Washington, 122 balls into his Test career. He plays out five dot balls. The sixth will be in montages decades from now. Lyon drifts one down the leg side and Washington senses an opportunity. His back leg is down, before the bat forms a perfect arc to connect with the ball. It's a slog sweep but with a straight bat. It goes over wide long on. It's a no-look six, the type you will replay many times over.

That was Washington's first scoring shot since he lost Shardul, after a 123-run partnership that left the Australian bowlers down mentally. Between those two shots, the Indian rearguard once again showed enough fight and ability. The hosts lead by 54 — 21 without loss after six overs — but Washington and Shardul were the unlikely batting stars, a two-man fighting unit who switched the lights on by playing lights out cricket.

In a series full of documentary-worthy Indian stories — Ajinkya Rahane's fighting 100 in Melbourne, R Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari's stubborn resistance in Sydney, a conveyor belt of greenhorns replacing injured comrades — this partnership was yet another masterpiece, a Rembrandt to go with the Van Goghs and the Caravaggios that came before.

It's to their credit that their stand wasn't a product of chancy batsmenship but calculated risk-taking. They played out overs when caution was required and put the bad balls away. It would be fair to say if this was a Covid-free world, Shardul and Washington would have been playing for the respective domestic sides now. Yet, here they were, driving a generational bowling line-up, both with the old and the new ball, up the wall.

The only thing less wild than their stand — 123 runs off 216 balls, with 15 4s and 2 6s — was their back stories. Washington last played first-class cricket in 2017. That he wasn't formally inducted into the squad tells you everything you need to know. Shardul, like the off-spinner, was supposed to be a net-bowler on the trip. Their primary purpose was to bowl long, unglamorous, behind-the-scenes spells to their more established compatriots in the nets. After the day's play, Shardul admitted that he wanted to spend time on the wicket. "These are the moments we wait and live for," he said. "This time also I was only thinking that the longer I bat, the smaller their lead will be. Just wanted to spend time on the pitch."

The plan the two cooked up was simple enough. Considering their bowlers were visibly tiring, it was all about hanging in there. "We knew their bowlers were tiring," he said. "We knew if we hung in for one hour we would be on top. It was really important for us to hang in there. If someone lost his focus and tried a rash stroke, we would let him know and get them back to basics."

Simple. Also effective.

India's Shardul Thakur (L) & Washington Sundar during third day on Sunday. The duo put on a 123-run partnership for the seventh wicket | AP

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA 1ST INNINGS: 369

INDIA 1ST INNINGS (OVERNIGHT 62-2):

Pujara c Paine b Hazlewood 25, Rahane c Wade b Starc 37, Agarwal c Smith b Hazlewood 38, Pant c Green b Hazlewood 23, Washington c Green b Starc 62, Thakur b Cummins 67, Saini c Smith b Hazlewood 5, Siraj b Hazlewood 13, Natarajan not out 1. **Extras** (b5, lb7, nb2) **14. Total** (all out, 111.4 overs) **336. FoW:** 1-11, 2-60, 3-105, 4-144, 5-161, 6-186, 7-309, 8-320, 9-328. **Bowling:** Starc 23-3-88-2, Hazlewood 24.4-6-57-5, Cummins 27-5-94-2, Green 8-1-20-0, Lyon 28-9-65-1, Labuschagne 1-1-0-0.

AUSTRALIA 2ND INNINGS:

Harris (batting) 1, Warner (batting) 20. Total (6 overs) 21. **Bowling:** Siraj 2-1-12-0, Natarajan 3-0-6-0, Washington 1-0-3-0.

Bopanna forced into quarantine

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN
@ Chennai

THE fast unravelling preparation for the upcoming Australian Open has now hit Rohan Bopanna. As one of the travellers from a flight from Doha that returned a positive result, the organisers have now asked Bopanna to quarantine in his hotel room for 12 days. "Yes I was (travelling in that flight)," Bopanna said. "So have another 12 days in quarantine now despite being negative."

Bopanna, scheduled to play the Grand Slam with Portugal's Joao Souza, was on a chartered flight from Doha (QR 7485). Players in that flight were sent to the strictest quarantine possible — confined to their hotel rooms — as one of the passengers in the flight had tested positive. As per the original arrangement, Bopanna had access to the gym, swimming pool as well as the tennis court with his training partner for up to five hours every day. Now, those privileges have been removed as he has been deemed a 'close contact' of the passenger who tested positive. A total of 72 players, including multiple Major champs Victoria Azarenka and Angelique Kerber, have been sent to the harshest quarantines possible.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

NorthEast win, Goa hold Bagan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AFTER 43 days, NorthEast United FC finally tasted victory as they beat Jamshedpur FC 2-1 in the ISL match at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Sunday. They are up to fifth place with 15 points while Jamshedpur are eighth with 13 points.

New coach Khalid Jamil made sure the team was aggressive from the start and it paid dividends in the 36th minute with Ashutosh Mehta scoring bullet of a header. The team certainly looked like enjoying more freedom than in previous games.

In the second game of the night, FC Goa continued their ascendancy in the league after a slow start to the season with a hard fought 1-1 draw against the ATK Mohun Bagan at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. A stunning free-kick from Edu Garcia in the 75th minute gave Bagan the lead but substitute Ishan Pandita struck in the 85th minute to steal a point and stretch their unbeaten run to five matches.

Great Dane & sweet Carolina

Viktor Axelsen and Carolina Marin emerged Thailand Open champs in Bangkok, winning the men's and women's singles titles respectively. Here's a look at the finals...

IDEAL PLATFORM FOR MARIN

Reigning Olympic champ Marin bolstered her chances of defending that title later this year after beating top seed Tai Tzu-ying 21-9, 21-16. Spaniard Marin, 27, was an imposing force with razor-sharp smashes and clever net-work.

LONG STORY SHORT

Despite having a cold, fourth seed Axelsen of Denmark was electric in the men's final against Hong Kong's Angus Long, ranked eighth, claiming the title in straight sets. Axelsen took just 44 minutes to triumph 21-14, 21-14 over Long.

RESULTS

Singles: Men: V Axelsen (DEN) bt A Long (HKG) 21-14, 21-14. **Women:** C Marin (ESP) bt T Tzu-ying (TPE) 21-9, 21-16. **Men's doubles:** L Yang/W Chi-Lin (TPE) bt G V Shem/T Wee Kiong (MAS) 21-16, 21-23, 21-19. **Women's doubles:** G Polii/A Rahayu (INA) bt J Kititharakul and R Prajongjai (THA) 21-15, 21-12. **Mixed doubles:** D Puavaranukroh/S Taerattanachai (THA) bt P Jordan and M Daeva Oktavianti (INA) 21-3, 20-22, 21-18.

TOUGH OUTING FOR INDIANS

India were in focus on Day 1 after two players' — Saina Nehwal & HS Prannoy — PCR tests returned positive. However, they were allowed to compete after their antibody IgG tests returned positive. On the court, the Indians did not have much to write home about. Saina entered second round, showed plenty of fight but looked fatigued. Kidambi Srikanth reached second round but could not compete due to injury concerns. No Indian could go beyond the second round.

EXPRESS READ

Chelsea eke out big win, Leicester beat Saints

LONDON: Mason Mount put Chelsea back on track with the late winner that sealed a vital 1-0 victory at 10-man Fulham, while Leicester posted a 2-0 win over Southampton in the EPL. James Maddison (37') and Harvey (90+5') for the winners. On Sunday, Tottenham climbed back into the title race as Tanguy Ndombele's stunning strike sealed a 3-1 win against Sheffield United.

Andhra dent Kerala's qualification chances

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AFTER three wins on the bounce, Kerala were stopped in their tracks by Andhra, who secured a comfortable six-wicket victory in the low-scoring Elite Group E encounter of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in Mumbai on Sunday.

Their first win has dented Kerala's bid to qualify for the knockouts. They are placed second with 12 points (top team qualify from each group). Table-toppers Haryana also have same points but they still have two matches to play. Andhra are out of the reckoning with four points from four matches.

Having been asked to bat first from 21/0, Kerala lost four wickets for 17 runs to stutter at 38/4. Sachin Baby (51 n.o) came to the rescue as they posted 112/4. Andhra reached the target in the 18th over as Ashwin Hebbar (48) and Ambati Rayudu (38 n.o) steered their team to an impressive victory.

LOCAL EXPRESS

Akshan steals show in Mount Joy victory

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AKSHAN Rao came up with a brilliant all-round performance to help Mount Joy Cricket Club beat RV Engineering College by 162 runs in the KSCA U19 inter-club tournament. Besides Akshan's 90-ball 105 in the first innings, Suhas also scored 172 off 151 balls to steer their team to 364/7. Akshan then delivered with the ball, scalping six wickets to dismiss RV Engineering College for 202 runs.

Brief Scores (selected): Mount Joy Cricket Club: 364/7 in 50.0 ovs [Suhas R 172, Akshan Rao 105] **bt** RV Engineering College: 202/10 in 37.2 ovs [Varun Manjunath 80, Akshan Rao 6/45] by 162 runs.

Friends Union CC (1): 321/7 in 50.0 ovs [Lochan S Gowda 183] **bt** Rajajinagar Cricketers: 175/10 in 37.1 ovs [Raghuveer 52, Mahendra 4/38, Angadi 4/27] by 146 runs.

Swastic Union CC (2): 349/4 in 50 ovrs [Macneil Hadley Noronha 127, Yashwant 134] **bt** Vultures Cricket Club: 328/6 in 50 ovs [Rahul Prasanna 95] by 21 runs.

Prajwal, Soha bag AITA pro event titles

Local favourites Prajwal Dev and Soha Sadiq scored upset victories to win the men's and women's titles respectively in the AITA pro event here on Saturday. Second seed Prajwal beat top seed from Andhra Pradesh, Nikki Poonacha 6-4, 3-6, 6-1 while Soha, got the better off Samhitha Chamarthi of Tamil Nadu 6-4, 6-7 (0), 6-2.

E-TENDER NOTICE

Tender is invited for construction of 5 Star Hotel complex having conference / banquet hall facility and guest rooms, air conditioning, electrical and other services for Megapode Resort at Haddo, Port Blair, A & N Islands (2nd call). The e-tender forms and other details can be obtained from website **https://eprocure.andaman.gov.in**. The last date of submission of the bid is on 01.02.2021 at 3.00 PM ECPT Rs. 68.19 Cr.

ID No.2021_APWD_1998_1

Executive Engineer PBND, Port Blair

QuoteExpress

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KYLE CHANDLER

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of India Undertaking)

OPEN E-TENDER (SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM) INVITATION NOTICE

(1) Name of Work: Provision of Power Supply & Lighting Arrangement for OHE Depot, Tower Wagon Shed & Traction Sub-station (TSS) between Roha to Verna on Konkan Railway Route in the State of Maharashtra and Goa. **Tender Notice No.: KR/RN-RE/EL/T/1/2021 dt. 18/01/2021. Estimated Cost:** ₹ 76,07,839/- excluding GST. **EMD :** ₹ 1,52,200/-.

(2) Name of Work: Electrification of OHE Depot cum AEE/TRD Office and Power Supply Arrangement for Sectioning and Paralleling Post (SP) / Sub-Sectioning and Paralleling Post (SSP) / Traction Sub-Station (TSS) under Karwar Region in the State of Karnataka. **Tender Notice No.: KR/KW-RE/EL/T/2/2021 dt. 18/01/2021. Estimated Cost:** ₹ 79,31,985/- excluding GST. **EMD :** ₹ 1,58,700/-.

Completion Period: Three Months. **Last Date & Time for Online Submission of Tender :** 02/02/2021 up to 15.00 Hrs. **Opening of Tender :** On 02/02/2021 at 15.30 Hrs. Amendments / Corrigendum if any, would be uploaded on IREPS website only. **Submission of Tender Documents :** Through IREPS. Manual Tender Documents shall not be accepted.

MOTHER DAIRY
(A Unit of: Karnataka Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd)
GKVK POST, YELAHANKA, BANGALORE-560029.
Phone No: 080-22179011/55. e-mail: civil@motherdairykmf.in

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Mother dairy a unit of Karnataka Milk federation invites tenders from eligible tenderers for the registered in KPWD/CPWD/MES of class-I for the construction of work detailed in the Table below. The tenderers may submit tenders through e-procurement portal only. Tender documents may be downloaded from the website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in/**

Sl No	Name of work	Approximate value of work (Rs.)	Earnest money Deposit (Rs.)	Period of Completion
IFT No: KMF/MD/ENGG(CIVIL)/T-23/2020-21				
1	Providing & laying of acid and lye resistance tiles for FGS first floor godown at Mother Dairy.	20,55,568/-	51,400/-	3 Months

1) Date of downloading of tender document: **20-01-2021 2)** Last date and time for receipt of tenders: **04-02-2021 up to 5.00 PM. 3)** Time and date of opening Technical tender : **08-02-2021 at 11 AM**

Sd/- Director, Mother Dairy

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521

No.SEE/AEE(C)/Trans/W&M/DVG/20-21/Cys-71 Date : 13.01.2021
No.SEE/AEE(C)/Trans/W&M/DVG/20-21/Cys-69 Date : 13.01.2021

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(e-Procurement Mode only)

KPTCL, invites bid against this enquiry No. **SEE/AEE(C)/Trans/W&M/DVG/20-21/CYS-71, Dated: 13.01.2021 for the works coming in the transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Davanagere.**

The detailed notification regarding the works called through e-procurement website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** along with Category allocation can be obtained from the e-Procurement Portal **after 18.01.2021 at 12.00 Hrs onwards.**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Manual Mode Only)

KPTCL, invites bid against this enquiry No. **903/SEE/AEE(C)/Trans/W&M/DVG/20-21/CYS-69, Dated: 13.01.2021 for the works coming in the transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Davanagere.**

The detailed notification regarding the works called through manual mode can be obtained from the office of the undersigned on or after **18.01.2021** during working hours.

Sd/- **Superintending Engineer (Ele),** Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Hadadi Road, Opp: Stadium, Davanagere-577004. Phone: 08192-250774

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
Jalamandali Compound, Sir M. Vishveshvarayya Road, Dharwad-580 001. Karnataka. Phone No. : 0836-2447090, Fax : 0836-2446890, E-mail : kwbcen@gmail.com

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

Item Rate Tenders for the following work is invited (two cover system) through e-Procurement portal (https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in) from the firms / contractors who satisfy the Technical & Financial Eligibility Criteria as detailed below (For details please refer e-procurement portal).

No. KWB/CE(D)/SGEE (BGM)/DCE-1/TA-1/AE(ELE)/TND/2020-21/1576 Date : 15-01-2021

Name of Work : Supply, Installation, Testing and Successful Commissioning of Flow & Water Quality Monitoring, Control Systems along with PLC/RTU Hardware with SCADA and allied Electrical & Mechanical (E&M) components for water supply from the source to over head tanks including operation and maintenance of above system for a period of 2 years after defect liability period of 1 year under Providing continuous pressurized Water supply system, Transmission mains, storage, Improvements to Distribution system to Basavana Bagewadi town. Appx. Amount put to Tender Rs. **1,38,76,298/-**, E.M.D. Rs. EMD Declartion shall be uploaded as per Govt. order No. ಆಇ 675 ಮಷ್ಯ-12/2020, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22-12-2020, Cost of bid document : As per e-Procurement Portal, Stipulated period for completion of works including monsoon : 3 (Three) Months Including monsoon period. Technical & Financial Eligibility Criteria : For Technical and Financial eligibility criteria please refer e-Procurement Portal.

The details regarding participation in e-procurement process can be obtained from e-Procurement Cell, Centre for e-Governance, Room No. 141, Gate No. 2 MS Building, Bengaluru 560001, Phone : **080-25501216 / 25501227, 080-4601000 / 68948777**, Email Support : hphelpdesk.blr@intarvo.com, support@eprohelpdesk.com.

(1) Registration in the Board is not mandatory to apply for the above said works. (2) The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)/Bid security declaration shall be uploaded in the form specified in the Bidding Documents. (3) Right to accept any tender and to reject any or all the tenders rests with the Chief Engineer, K.U.W.S and D. Board, Dharwad. (4) A weightage of 10% per year will be added to the Annual Turnover and also to the value of completed works of the previous years to bring them to the price level of the financial year 2020-21. (5) It is mandatory to upload the various Technical & Financial eligibility requirements and also fill up the formats mentioned in various sections of bid document while submitting the bids. The incomplete bids shall be considered as substantially non-responsive.

Calendar of Events : (1) Date and time for commencement of downloading of tender document from the e-procurement portal : **19-01-2021** after 11.00 hours. (2) Pre-bid meeting : **27-01-2021** after 11.00 hours (3) Last Date & Time for Bid Submission : **08-02-2021** upto 17:30 hours. (4) Date and Time of opening of Technical Bid : **11-02-2021** after 11:00 hours.

For further details, the Office of the Chief Engineer, K.U.W.S & D. Board, Dharwad may please be contacted.

Sd/-
(K.V. Srikeshava)
Chief Engineer,
DIPR/DWD/MCA/626/2020-21 **KUWS & D Board, Dharwad.**

ICAR - DIRECTORATE OF CASHEW RESEARCH
Darbe P.O., PUTTUR - 574 202, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka
Phone:08251- 231530 (Off.); EPABX: 08251- 230902, 236490; Fax: 08251- 234350
Email: dircajures@yahoo.com. dircajures@gmail.com, dircajures@rediffmail.com

F.No.163/Rate Contract/2020-Stores Dated: 16-01-2021

TENDER NOTICE

Rate contract proposals are invited by the Director (Acting), DCR, Puttur for entering into Rate Contract with the reputed manufactures/authorized agencies having IT-PAN and GST registration for the supply of Chemicals/Lab consumables/ Glass wares/ Plastic wares etc for the laboratory use at this Directorate for the year 2021-2022.

Last date for submission of Rate Contract Proposal : Up to 14.30 hours of 08-02-2021
Scrutiny of the RC proposal : 10.00 hours of 09-02-2021
Desirous and eligible agencies for details & submission may visit the Institute website: https://cashew.icar.gov.in/tender/

Sd/-
Director (Acting)

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No.: SEE/Tr(M)/RMGC/EE(O)/AEE-1/F-35/2020-21/4245-49 Date: 15.01.2021

TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement mode only)

KPTCL invites tenders from the eligible bidders for the following work.

Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/RMGC/Repair of Tfr/EPR-218/Call-2 Dtd: 15.01.2021. For the work of dismantling, transportation (To&fro), Repair of Faulty power transformer, testing, assembling, erection and commissioning of repaired power transformer of rating 8MVA 66/11kV, Ashoka make, Sl.No.5031, lying at 66/11kV Hullenahalli Substation in TL&SS, Division, KPTCL, Nelamangala on Total Turnkey Basis. Amount put to tender: **Rs.30,03,552.00.** Last Date & time for receipt of Bids: **02.02.2021 at 16.00 hrs.** The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging into KPTCL website **www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** or Hyperlink "e-Procurement-KPTCL" on or after **16.00 Hrs 18.01.2021.** Any other details can be had from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Elec.), Transmission (Maintenance), Ramanagara Circle, KPTCL, 220/66/11kV Vrushabhavati Valley Station, 1st Floor, Near RR Nagara Arch, Mysore Road, Bengaluru-560039. Telephone: 080-28608484.

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Pakistan's planning minister says the country's drug regulatory authority has approved the use of Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine and the government is trying to make it available by the first quarter of the year.

More worries for Norway, death toll rises

At least 29 elderly people die after receiving Pfizer vaccine, authorities lower vulnerable age group from 80 to 75

HEALTH

COPENHAGEN: There's more concern after Norway reported deaths of elderly people after taking the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. According to reports, at least 29 elderly people have died after taking the first shot of the vaccine. The Norwegian Medicines Agency in a written response to *Bloomberg* said that all deaths are related to the vaccine. The country has been using only Pfizer vaccine until Friday.

Initially, there were reports that 23 died after taking the vaccine and later the figure reached 29 when six more people were added to the list of casualty though it is not clear as to when the deaths had occurred.

"There are 13 deaths that have been assessed, and we are aware of another 16 deaths that are currently being assessed," the agency told *Bloomberg*.

Apparently all the reported deaths are related to "elderly people with serious basic disorders. Most people have experienced the expected side effects of the coronavirus vaccine, such as nausea and vomiting, fever, local reactions at the injection site, and worsening of their underlying condition." The authorities have reportedly lowered the vulnerable age group from 80 to 75.

The findings have prompted Norway to suggest that Covid-19 vaccines may be too risky for the very old and terminally ill, the most cautious statement yet from a European health authority. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health, according to *Bloomberg*, says that "for those with the most severe frailty, even relatively mild vaccine side effects can have serious consequences. For those who have a very short remaining life span anyway, the benefit of the vaccine may be marginal or irrelevant."

An elderly man takes the first dose of Pfizer vaccine in Norway

Pfizer and BioNTech are working with the Norwegian regulator to investigate the deaths in Norway, Pfizer said in an e-mailed statement to *Bloomberg*. "The number of incidents so far is not alarming, and in line with expectations," Pfizer said.

"We are aware that deaths have also been reported in other countries, but do not have full details of this yet," Norway's medicines agency told Bloomberg. "There are also differences between countries in who is prioritised for vaccination, and this could also affect the reporting of side effects, including death."

There have cases of allergic reactions in the United States as well as in other nations after the rollout of the vaccine, at times severe too. According to reports, Norway's experience doesn't mean that younger, healthier people should avoid being vaccinated. But it's an early indication of what to watch as countries begin to issue safety monitoring reports on the vaccines.

Pfizer assures Europe

Pharma giant Pfizer tried to ease concerns in Europe about deliveries of its coronavirus vaccine as nations across the world doubled down on restrictions to fight the pandemic.

Worries have grown that delays in the delivery of Pfizer-BioNTech shots could hamper a European vaccine rollout which has already faced heavy criticism across the continent.

Work is ongoing at the Pfizer plant in Belgium to increase capacity, and the firm and its partner BioNTech said Saturday it would allow them to "significantly" scale up vaccine production in the second quarter. Deliveries would be back to the original schedule to the EU from January 25, they pledged.

Several Nordic and Baltic countries have described the situation as "unacceptable", while Belgium's vaccination strategy task force condemned a lack of consultation by Pfizer over the deliveries as "incomprehensible".

FACT OF THE MATTER

Covid found on ice cream

HEALTH

The coronavirus was found on ice cream produced in eastern China, prompting a recall of cartons from the same batch, according to the government. The Daqiaodao Food Co, Ltd. in Tianjin, adjacent to Beijing, was sealed and its employees were being tested for the coronavirus, a city government statement said. There was no indication anyone had contracted the virus from the ice cream. Most of the 29,000 cartons in the batch had yet to be sold, the government said. It said 390 sold in Tianjin were being tracked down and authorities elsewhere were notified of sales to their areas. The ingredients included New Zealand milk powder and whey powder from Ukraine, the government said.

Sneaky tactics by beetles

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR

Some beetles go to great 'and disgusting' lengths for their children. They scout for a dead mouse or bird, dig a hole and bury it, pluck its fur or feathers, roll its flesh into a ball and cover it in goop all to feed their future offspring. Now scientists think that goo might do more than just slow decay. It also appears to hide the scent of the decomposing bounty and boosts another odor that repels competitors. "It helps them to hide their resource from others," said Stephen Trumbo, who studies animal behavior at Connecticut. "They try to keep everyone away." The beetles aren't the only creatures who try to deceive their rival or prey with subtle tactics.

Skepticism in jab delays inoculations in Eastern Europe

HEALTH

BELGRADE: Vaccines from the West, Russia or China? Or none at all? That dilemma faces nations in southeastern Europe, where coronavirus vaccination campaigns are off to a slow start — overshadowed by heated political debates and conspiracy theories.

In countries like the Czech Republic, Serbia, Bosnia, Romania and Bulgaria, vaccine skeptics have included former

In the southeastern Europe, vaccination campaign is overshadowed by political debates or conspiracy theories | AP

presidents and even some doctors. Serbian tennis champion Novak Djokovic was among those who said he did not want to be forced to get inoculated.

False beliefs that the coronavirus is a hoax or that jabs would inject microchips into people have spread in the countries that were formerly under harsh Communist rule. Those who once underwent mass inoculations are deeply split over whether to get the vaccines.

"There is a direct link between support for conspiracy theories and skepticism toward vaccination," a recent Balkan study warned. "A majority across the region does not plan to take the vaccine, a ratio considerably lower than elsewhere in Europe, where a majority favors taking the vaccine."

Only about 2 lakh people applied for the vaccine in Serbia, a nation of 7 million, in the days after authorities opened the procedure. One million Serbians signed up for 100 euros on the first day the government offered the pandemic aid.

Hoping to encourage vaccinations, Serbian officials have gotten their shots on TV. Yet they themselves have been split over whether to get the Western-made Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine or Russia's Sputnik V.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic on Saturday greeted a shipment of 1 million doses of the Chinese Sinopharm vaccine, saying he will receive a shot to show that it is safe. "Serbs prefer the Russian vaccine," read a recent headline of the Informer, a pro-government tabloid, as officials announced that 38 per cent of those who have applied to take the shots favor the Russian vaccine, while 31 per cent want the Pfizer-BioNTech version — a rough division among pro-Russians and pro-Westerners in Serbia.

In Bosnia, a war-torn country that remains ethnically divided among Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats, politics also are a factor, as the Serb-run half appeared set to opt for the Russian vaccine, while the Bosniak-Croat part likely will turn to the Western ones.

EXPLOSIVE ERUPTION

Mount Semeru, the highest volcano on Indonesia's island of Java, shot a plume of ash and debris some 4.5 kilometres into the sky on Saturday night as bright red lava flowed down from its crater. There were no casualties | AFP

NASA test of rocket engines cut short

SPACE

WASHINGTON: NASA conducted a test firing of the engines for its giant Space Launch System (SLS) lunar rocket Saturday but they shut down earlier than planned, the agency said.

The "hot-fire" test at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi was supposed to last a little over eight minutes — the time the engines would burn in flight — but they shut down just over a minute into the burn. "Teams are assessing the data to determine what caused the early shutdown, and will determine a path forward," NASA said.

The SLS rocket is intended to launch the Artemis missions that will take US astronauts back to the Moon. Despite being cut short, NASA said the test of the RS-25 engines had provided valuable information for the planned missions. "Saturday's test was an important step forward to ensure that the core stage of the SLS rocket is ready for the Artemis I mission, and to carry crew on future missions," said NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine.

It is not yet known what caused the early shutdown.

Egypt unveils ancient treasures

ARCHAEOLOGY

Egypt on Sunday unveiled ancient treasures found at the Saqqara archaeological site near Cairo, including sarcophagi over 3,000 years old, a discovery that "rewrites history", according to famed Egyptologist Zahi Hawass. Saqqara is a vast necropolis of the ancient Egyptian capital of Memphis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site home to more than a dozen pyramids, ancient monasteries, and animal burial sites. A team headed by Hawass made the finds near the pyramid of King Teti, the first pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom. More than 50 wooden sarcophagi dating to the New Kingdom (16th century BC to 11th century BC) were found in a burial shaft.

GLOBAL OUTCRY

Starvation haunts Ethiopia's Tigray

DISASTER

NAIROBI: From "emaciated" refugees to crops burned on the brink of harvest, starvation threatens the survivors of more than two months of fighting in Ethiopia's Tigray region. The first humanitarian workers to arrive after pleading with the Ethiopian government for access describe weakened children dying from diarrhea after drinking from rivers. Shops were looted or depleted weeks ago. A local official told a January 1 crisis meeting of government and aid workers that hungry people had asked for "a single biscuit."

More than 4.5 million people, nearly the region's entire population, need emergency food, participants say. At their next meeting on January 8, a Tigray administrator warned that without aid, "hundreds of thousands might starve to death" and some already had, according to minutes obtained by *AP*.

"There is an extreme urgent need — I don't know what more words in English to use — to rapidly scale up the humanitarian response because the population is dying every day as we speak," Mari Carmen Vinoles, head of the emergency unit for Doctors Without Borders, told the *AP*.

Tigray region already had a food security problem amid a locust outbreak | AP

But pockets of fighting, resistance from some officials and sheer destruction stand in the way of a massive food delivery effort. To send 15-kilogram rations to 4.5 million people would require more than 2,000 trucks, the meeting's minutes said, while some local responders are reduced to getting around on foot.

The specter of hunger is sensitive in Ethiopia, which transformed into one of the world's fastest-growing economies in the decades since images of starvation there in the 1980s led to a global outcry. Drought, conflict and government denial contributed to the famine, which swept through Tigray and killed an estimated 1 million people.

The largely agricultural Tigray region of about 5 million people already had a food security problem amid a locust outbreak when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on November 4 announced fighting between his forces and those of the defiant regional government. Tigray leaders dominated Ethiopia for almost three decades but were sidelined after Abiy introduced reforms that won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019.

Thousands of people have been killed in the conflict. More than 50,000 have fled into Sudan, where one doctor has said newer arrivals show signs of starvation. Others shelter in rugged terrain. A woman who recently left Tigray described sleeping in caves with people who brought cattle, goats and the grain they had managed to harvest.

"It is a daily reality to hear people dying with the fighting consequences, lack of food," a letter by the Catholic bishop of Adigrat said this month. Hospitals and other health centres, crucial in treating malnutrition, have been destroyed. In markets, food is "not available or extremely limited," the United Nations says.

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18•01•2021
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

Airbus A380

Airbus A380, the world's largest commercial jet, was unveiled at a ceremony in Toulouse on this day in 2005

SPACIOUS FLIGHT

As a spacious passenger aircraft, its cabin allows travellers to stretch out in the wide seats. It has two full-length decks with wide-body dimensions

THE UNVEILING

French President Jacques Chirac, and the leaders of Britain, Germany and Spain and CEOs from 14 airlines attended the unveiling ceremony

FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

Fifteen years later, things are very different for the 'Superjumbo' as what was supposed to be a game-changing aircraft is now fighting to survive

Will Tanya Hope join Bell Bottom 2's cast?

PG 4

'Root' of the matter

Lettuce, mint, basil or any other herbs... These are being grown not from soil but from water as Bengalureans experiment with newer gardening techniques

MONIKA MONALISA

Recently Mangalurean beauty Shilpa Shetty posted a video showing off her hydroponics garden, talking at length about the fresh greenery that surrounds her. South Indian actress Samantha Akkineni, who has also taken to hydroponics gardening, emphasised on growing food oneself. With celebrities raving about the importance of farm to folk, Bengalureans are not far behind in setting up their little kitchen garden. But taking it further and adding some science to it, garden lovers in the city have a new-found interest in hydroponic and aquaponics farming. In one method, fertilisers are added to water in the tank, and in another, fish stay in the water tank and their waste acts as nutrients for the plants.

While it might sound complicated, it's quite simple, say those who are working on it. Model Naved Qureshi finds it to be one of the simplest ways to grow veggies at home. "All I needed to set up was a good water supply and a place where sunlight would fall for 2-3 hours. You can also opt for artificial light," says Qureshi, who has a 16-pod (the number of plant holders) set up in his balcony. Started four months ago, Qureshi now grows lettuce, methi leaves and gongura leaves at home, but one can also grow veggies like cabbage and carrot. "Apart from it being easy, I also wanted to teach my six-year-old son about how plants are grown. Until then, he thought vegetables were grown by the vendor who delivers us the veggies," he says with a laugh.

Naved Qureshi and his son; and Aswathi Balakrishnan (top) with their indoor hydroponics plants

The other reason why these methods are getting popular, is the easy set up and the reduced labour cost. "It is a very convenient way of farming since people can do it in a vertical set up wherein more vegetable can be grown," explains Bharath Dayanada, founder of Eat Neat Project, an aquaponics farm and consultancy firm, which also helps set up aquaponics equipment at home.

That's precisely the reason even why Aswathi Balakrishnan says she opted for this. But she also mentions that the equipment and installations might create a slight dent in your pocket. "If you are going to go in for a 48-pod set like I did, it will cost close to ₹30,000, which makes it dearer than normal kitchen garden equipment," says Balakrishnan, a beauty and fashion blogger, adding that if one is passionate about gardening and has a busy schedule, this is worth the investment.

While 2021 promises normalcy for students in India, those looking to go abroad still remain stuck in limbo, hoping for the best amid new variants of the virus and vaccines

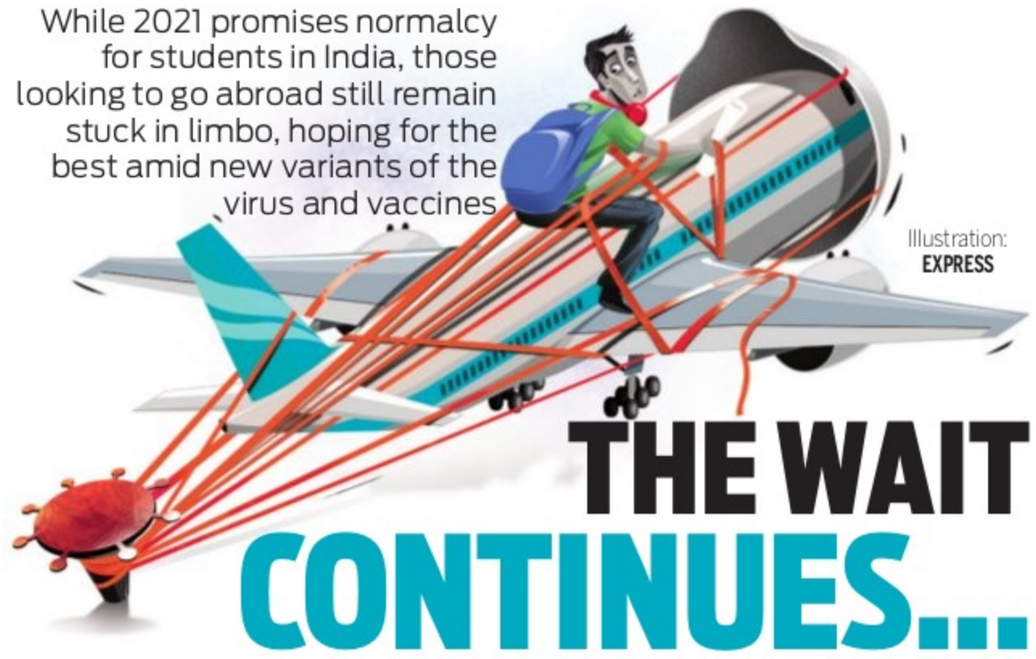


Illustration: EXPRESS

THE WAIT CONTINUES...

SIMRAN AHUJA

THE new year was supposed to bring renewed hope for Ishita Seth, who was all set to fly to the UK for her Masters degree. The discovery of a new strain of the virus and the subsequent flight ban brought back uncertainty. "I deferred my admission from September to January so I didn't have an option to push it further, I would have to apply again. I have to attend the classes that begin online and hope I'm able to fly out in February," says Seth, who chose to not go to the UK this month. Many are in the same boat as Seth.

With schools and colleges reopening in Bengaluru, things seem to be regaining a semblance of the old normal but for students like Seth, who applied to study abroad, things still remain stuck in limbo. Take, for instance, Harsh Bagrecha, who was pursuing an MBA at New York Institute of Technology. The Bengalurean returned to the city in May last year with the hope that he would be able to resume classes again by August but his university decided to continue remote classes. Having attended one-and-a-half semester online from Bengaluru, Bagrecha eventually took the "hard call" to defer his last semester to fall of 2021. "This doesn't just push my plans for the future but the worst drawback was legally losing the opportunity to be able to find a job in the US. I need to be enrolled in the university for two semesters in a row in order to be eligible for jobs," explains Bagrecha.

Having given up his old accommodation, he will have to find a new place to stay – a task he feels will be harder to achieve given that the stay period will be for a shorter period of his final semester. One of the main factors that prompted this decision was the time difference that came into play while pursuing classes online. "Even though I had classes only on three days, the timings were erratic – 4am, 6am or 10pm to 4am. The sleep cycle took a toll on my health," he says.

Online classes may have proven to be a boon in ensuring education stays afloat but for those going abroad, it takes away from their foremost reason to go down this route - the experience of exploring a new culture. So when Sonali Bachu returned to Bengaluru to complete the remainder of her MSc in marketing remotely, she advised other peers looking to go abroad to hold on to their plans. "Online learning doesn't give you the whole experience. It's especially hard to figure out when your group assignments are with classmates from different time zones," she says.

Online learning doesn't give you the whole experience. It's hard to do group assignments with classmates from different time zones

– Sonali Bachu, graduate student, University of Bath

Students are applying to more countries to see how the situation pans out. They are also feeling reassured by the measures international universities are taking

– Shaista Baljee, founder and MD, Ivy Aspire Education Consulting

Among new variants of the virus are also updates about vaccines, which has led to many being hopeful that things may improve for those applying to study abroad in the 2021 intake. According to Pooja Kishin, branch manager for SI UK Bangalore – an educational consultancy – the team has seen demand for UK studies throughout last year. "We have seen the situation getting stable with the availability of vaccines in the UK. International students would also be eligible to get vaccinated at no additional cost. Applicants and prospective students are confident and open enough to consider studying abroad in the UK despite the ongoing pandemic," she explains.

Shaista Baljee says going forward, the situation is only expected to be something we have more control over. "Students are applying to more countries to see how the situation pans out. Canada, US, Europe, extending UK to Ireland, Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia are popular. They are also realising we just have to embrace the Covid-19 situation. Students are also feeling reassured by the measures international universities are taking," says the founder and MD of Ivy Aspire Education Consulting.

CITY READ

BU convocation on Jan. 30

The 55th annual convocation of Bangalore University will be held on Jan. 30 at 11.30 am in the Jnana Jyothi auditorium on Palace Road, Central College premises. Dr K Sivan, chairman, Indian Space Research Organization, Bengaluru, and secretary, Department of Space, Government of India, will be the chief guest who will deliver the convocation address.

Awareness drive

To spread awareness on polio, Rotary 3190 organised a vintage car rally in association with Karnataka Vintage & Classic Car Club. Over 50 vintage cars and a few vintage bikes participated in the rally, which was flagged off from Manpho Convention Centre, Hebbal. The rally proceeded toward Hoskote and then to Kolar and back to Bengaluru. Speaking at the event, district governor Rtn. BL Nagendra Prasad said, "We have distributed 2,50,000 masks to SSLC students who were appearing to write their exams other than this more than 4,50,000 masks were distributed throughout the district. We have donated 74,11,594 medical and testing equipment. The total value of all these initiatives is worth more than ₹15 crore."

Designs from the new collection

Classic touch

Known for giving tradition a twist is designer Latha Puttanna, who tells *CE* about her new collection, Hosatana, which includes langhas, salwars and anarkalis

MONIKA MONALISA

Trends might go out of style but classics are always in. Latha Puttanna's designs fall in the second category. Puttanna has released Hosatana, meaning reinvent or rediscover in Kannada. Going by the name of the collection, she is revisiting some of her classic sari collections like Apsara and Jaji, and is presenting the latest collection with a new twist. It includes silk langhas, salwars and anarkalis. "Designs on old silk fabrics never go out of fashion. That is why we are always in awe of our mother's and grandmother's sarees. In Hosatana, I tried to revisit those fabrics to create something simple yet stylish," she says, adding that her collections – Apsara and Jaji – are almost 20 years old. "Indian handlooms, especially silk, can be interpreted in many ways," she adds.

Puttanna has also launched her collection of scarves or dupattas called Musuku, which means 'veil' in Kannada. "Masks and scarves have become key. So why not come up with something around that," laughs Puttanna, adding that she understands the practicality of the situation. "Many might not want to spend money on a whole set of clothes, since there are not many occasions to wear them to. A scarf or dupatta can change the whole look," she says.

Speaking about what the inspiration behind the idea of this collection was, she says it's the learning during the pandemic. "If there is something that I learnt during these difficult times, it's the idea about living minimally. One should always help others when needed. This collection provided work and livelihood for our team members. For me, there is no better achievement than this," says Puttanna.

WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE

BARISTA PRIDE

Starbucks has kick started the third edition of their annual Barista Pride campaign. This year the store is all set to showcase beverage innovation through its initiative with the launch of 210 handcrafted beverages across India.
Available at: All Starbucks outlets

REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL

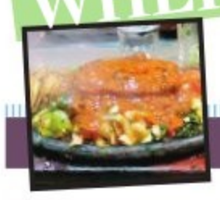
STS India, a city-based cultural organisation, is hosting a virtual celebration for Republic Day. The event will feature online team games, puzzle solving, quiz, drawing competition, singing of patriotic songs and more such amazing activities.
For details: WhatsApp 9538952052

HYDRATE YOUR SKIN

Organic beauty brand Soulflower launches Soulflower Herbal Tea Tree & Aloevera Brightening oil-free Gel Moisturizer with Vitamin C. It is a gentle refreshing gel to help soothe, hydrate, and control the look of dry, irritated skin. Price: ₹350.
Available at: https://www.soulflower.biz/

SPECIAL 2021 MENU

Social has introduced a special menu of 21 of eats and drinks priced at ₹100 only.
When: All month, 4-7pm
Where: All Social outlets



CHECK OUT these scrumptious sizzlers **WHEN & WHERE** Jan 31. At Brunchilly - Sarovar Portico, Outer Ring Road

Flavourful delights

Get a taste of Kolhapur in Bengaluru with this 10-day food festival curated by chef Dev Kasalkar along with executive chef Altamsh Patel. From Tambada and Pandhara Rassa, Bhatla Wange, Mutton Kharda, Chicken Lonche for the non-vegetarians to Sol Kadhi, Khuska Pulao, Ghavachi Huggi, Dakkhani missal and Pithle for the vegetarians, there's a wide variety to try from. **Where:** Soul City, Oakwood Premiere Prestige, Vittal Mallya Road **When:** till Jan 18 **Details:** 9611195671

Smart wallet

William Penn launches Cashew Smart Wallet. Cashew is a smart wallet with fingerprint authentication and smartphone connectivity. It is always connected to your smartphone using bluetooth technology to ensure you always have your wallet by your side. Price: ₹11,999. **Available at:** https://www.williampenn.net/brands/cashew/cashew-smart-wallet-black.html

Street food festival

Curated by chefs Nikhil Baveja and Cyrus Irani, the menu will offer street food dishes from Lucknow, Delhi and Punjab.
Where: Hard Rock Cafe, St Marks Road and Whitefield
When: All month

Become a dragon warrior

In collaboration with DreamWorks Animation and Universal Brand Development, Reebok has officially unveiled its Reebok x Kung Fu Panda full-family footwear and apparel collection. Celebrating the iconic animated franchise, the collection is available globally.
Available at: Reebok outlets and shop4reebok.com

Your cup of tea

Teabox has come up with a special wellness range inspired by Ayurveda, that have a multitude of benefits. Their wellness range goes beyond a refreshing cup of tea through strong research-based findings that are said to build your immune system. The variants include Immunity Booster Tea, Stress Reliever Tea, Digestive Tea, Detox Tea, Sugar Control Tea, and Weight Loss Tea. **For details, visit:** https://inteabox.com

Going gourmet

Cinnamon, a deli known for its freshly-baked bread and desserts, has opened its doors again for customers.
Where: Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel

Art attack

The virtual India Art Festival brings together 20 art galleries and 1,000 art works.
When: Till March 20
Where: indiaartfest.in

Colours of nature

Attend this art show that presents art works by students of Swar Sangam, Kolkata. Titled 'Hues', it is their attempt to recreate the colours inspired by nature.
When: Till Jan. 30
Where: MKF Museum of Art, Lavelle Road

QUICK FIX

What's cooking

IN YOUR KITCHEN?
We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at cityexpresschn@gmail.com.

STIRRED VEGGIES

INGREDIENTS

- **Carrot:** 1-2
- **Beans:** 200 g
- **Potato:** 1
- **Mushroom:** 3-4
- **Onion:** 1 medium
- **Black pepper:** 1 tsp
- **Salt** to taste

METHOD

- Cut all the veggies in long strips.
- Heat oil in a pan and add all the veggies. Cook till it becomes as crunchy as you prefer.
- Add salt and black pepper.
- You can also opt to add sesame seeds for a change in flavour.

— Larisa Rohana, Bengaluru

FIT BIT

APANA MUDRA

(MUDRA OF PURIFICATION)

In Sanskrit, 'Apana' means 'downward moving force' and 'Mudra' means 'gesture'. This is specifically used to detoxify and purify the body, while balancing the elements of fire, space and earth within it. It increases the vata and kapha doshas whilst helping to decrease pitta. Those with excess vata and kapha dosha should practice this mudra in moderation. It effectively controls apana vata and balances its functions in relation to excretion, menstruation and ejaculation. It stimulates and brings balance to apana vayu, thereby providing a remedy for such conditions.

STEPS

- Sit in Padmasana, Siddhasana, Swastikasana, Vajrasana. Place the hands on your thighs or knees with your palms facing upwards.
- Now, close your eyes and take some deep breaths with your awareness on the breathing process.
- Fold your middle and ring fingers and let the tips of both fingers jointly touch the tip of the thumb.
- Keep the other three fingers extended.
- Remove all thoughts from the mind and focus just on Om.
- Don't change the speed of breath.
- Meditate with this mudra for 45 minutes at a stretch every day or for 10 to 15 minutes three times a day. Although there is no harm in going beyond 45 minutes, for therapeutic benefits, 45 minutes is quite sufficient.
- This mudra can be practised by standing in Tadasana (Mountain pose), or sitting on a chair.

BENEFITS

- Balances the three Doshas (Vata, Kapha and Pitta) in the body.
- Helps reduce breathing-related issues.
- Makes the heart strong.
- Helps control diabetes.
- Helps improve the flow of perspiration, urine and stool.
- Its pressure centers on the respiratory tract and gastric diseases.
- Gives relief in diseases like indigestion, gas, acidity, constipation.
- Removes urinary defects.
- Strengthens pelvic organs and helps to relieve back pain.
- Helps strengthen the immune system.

LIMITATIONS

- Pregnant women (irrespective of the stage) should avoid this.
- Those suffering from severe digestion problems or problems related to irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel syndrome, etc., should consult a yoga expert before practising this.
- Those with diarrhoea, cholera and colitis should avoid this.

— by N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

SOUND BOARD

DEATH, LIES & CYANIDE

In this podcast, follow the horror of why a 47-year-old mother allegedly poisoned and killed six members of her own family over 14 years. And how she managed to remain above suspicion until the police blew the cover off in 2019.
- On Spotify

THE GRATITUDE DIARIES

Relying on both amusing personal experiences and extensive research, host Janice Kaplan explores how gratitude can transform every aspect of life including marriage and friendship, money and ambition, and health and well-being.
- On Spotify

THE KITCHEN IS ON FIRE

Food writer James Ramsden and musician Sam Herlihy dish up a weekly offering of food-related nonsense, exploring the complex and often confusing world of modern gastronomy.
- On Apple Podcasts

THE KEVIN ROSE SHOW

Join entrepreneur, technology investor, and self-experimenter Kevin Rose as he interviews technologists, scientists, meditators, self-experimenters, and productivity hackers to discover insights that you can incorporate into daily life.
- On Apple Podcasts

FOOD PSYCH PODCAST WITH CHRISTY HARRISON

Dietician Christy Harrison shares her journey from disordered eater and dieter to food writer and anti-diet dietician, and offers tips to help you accept your body and let go of guilt about food.
- On Apple Podcasts

POPULAR ON YOUTUBE

KENDASAMPIGE

Ravi, an attendant, has a love affair with Gowri, the daughter of the owner of his company. A set of events leads to him being jailed over a narcotic case. But he manages to flee with Gowri's help.
- Cast: Vikky Varun, Manvitha Harish

2) YAARE KOOGADALI

Kumara and Natesha escape from a mental hospital and come to the city. They are soon chased by a gangster while their actual truth is revealed.
- Cast: Puneeth Rajkumar, Bhavana

MYTHRI

Siddarama is one step away from winning a sum of `one crore in a game show hosted by his favourite actor Puneeth Rajkumar. However, scientist Mahadev Godke attempts to ruin his plans.
- Cast: Mohanlal, Puneeth Rajkumar

ANDHI VARUM NERAM

Santhi, a young village girl, moves to the city to study. However, when she dies during a college ragging session, her spirit returns to avenge her death.
- Cast: Kasthuri, Nizhalgal Ravi

Scan this QR code to find out how your favourite celebs are coping with the lockdown.

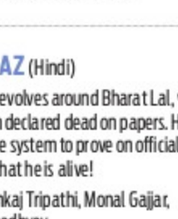
WHAT'S ON TED TALKS

1 LET'S MAKE THE WORLD WILD AGAIN BY KRISTINE TOMPKINS

Tracing her life from Patagonia CEO to passionate conservationist environmental activist Kristine Tompkins shares how she has helped establish national parks across South America — and discusses the critical role we all have to play to heal the planet.

2 CAN WE EDIT MEMORIES? BY AMY MILTON

Trauma and PTSD rewire your brain — especially your memory — and can unearth destructive emotional responses when stirred. Could we eliminate these triggers without erasing the memories themselves?



3 HOW DOES ALCOHOL MAKE YOU DRUNK? BY JUDY GRISEL

Ethanol: this molecule, made of little more than a few carbon atoms, is responsible for drunkenness. Often simply referred to as alcohol, ethanol is the active ingredient in alcoholic beverages. So how exactly does it cause drunkenness, and why does it have dramatically different effects on different people?

4 THE ART FORGER WHO TRICKED THE NAZIS BY NOAH CHARNEY

It was one of the strangest trials in Dutch history. The defendant in a 1947 case was an art forger who had counterfeited millions of dollars worth of paintings. But he wasn't arguing his innocence — in fact, his life depended on proving that he had committed fraud.

5 A HISTORICAL JOURNEY THROUGH LONELINESS BY FAY BOUND ALBERTI

Cultural historian Fay Bound Alberti explains why we need to reframe our perspective of loneliness, focusing on how nostalgia and our sensory experiences could help us better understand and heal from isolation.

NOW STREAMING

REGIONAL

BHARAATE (Kannada)

When Jagan meets Radha, it is love at first sight for him. But finding his happily-ever-after is harder than it seems.
Cast: Sriimurali, Sreeleela, P Ravi Shankar
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

SOLO (Tamil)

Four young men representing earth, fire, wind and water elements of the nature deal with love, loss and rage as they go through ups and downs in their lives.
Cast: Dulquer Salmaan, Sai Dhanshika, Neha Sharma
- Watch on: Netflix

MAYA BAZAR 2016 (Kannada)

An honest policeman, a con man, and a hopeless romantic form an unusual team during the days of demonetization to pull off a scam that quickly goes haywire.
Cast: Prakash Raj, Sadhu Kokila, Raj B. Shetty
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

ODEYA (Kannada)

Gajendra owns a transport company and also takes care of local residents, citizens and poor people with utmost care and affection. He and his four brothers lead a happy life helping the needy and protecting them from anti-social elements.
Cast: Darshan, Sanah Thimmayyah, Yashas Surya
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

MERI PYAARI BINDU (Hindi)

Childhood friends Abhimanyu and Bindu face friction when she realises that she does not love him after a brief relationship. After getting famous, Abhimanyu decides to pen a story based on his life.
Cast: Ayushmann Khurrana, Parineeti Chopra, Abish Mathew
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

MIDDLE CLASS MELODIES (Malayalam)

A comedy-drama depicting the congenial lives of the middle class in a village and the ambitions of a young man who moves to a nearby city to pursue his dream of owning a hotel.
Cast: Anand Devarkonda, Varsha Bollamma, Tharun Bhascker
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

BROCHEVAREVARURA (Telugu)

Three students, who fail their exams and waste their time, befriend Mitra in their college. They devise a plan to help her but it leads to various problems.
Cast: Sree Vishnu, Nivetha Thomas, Satyadev Kancharana
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

KAAGAZ (Hindi)

Kaagaz revolves around Bharat Lal, who has been declared dead on papers. He fights the system to prove on official records that he is alive!
Cast: Pankaj Tripathi, Monal Gajjar, Amar Upadhyay
- Watch on: Zee5

FOREIGN

DON'T LISTEN (Spanish)

After the strange death of his young son at their new home, Daniel hears a ghostly plea for help, spurring him to seek out a renowned paranormal expert.
Cast: Rodolfo Sancho, Ana Fernandez, Ramon Barea
- Watch on: Netflix

CRASH LANDING ON YOU (Korean, series)

A paragliding mishap drops a South Korean heiress in North Korea - and into the life of an army officer, who decides he will help her hide.
Cast: Hyunbin, Son Ye-jin, Kim Jung-hyun
- Watch on: Netflix

PSYCHO (English)

Marion disappears after stealing money from her employer. Her lover and sister try to find her and end up reaching the infamous Bates Motel, where they meet Norman Bates.
Cast: Anthony Perkins, Janet Leigh, Vera Miles
- Watch on: Netflix

ONCE UPON A TIME IN HOLLYWOOD (English)

Rick, a washed-out actor, and Cliff, his stunt double, struggle to recapture fame and success in 1960s Los Angeles. Meanwhile, living next door to Rick is Sharon Tate and her husband Roman Polanski.
Cast: Brad Pitt, Leonardo DiCaprio, Margot Robbie
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

SUBSCRIPTION

Netflix: ₹ 199 per month
Amazon Prime: ₹ 129 per month
Zee 5: ₹ 99 per month

Red-y for a replay

(This economics graduate spends her leisure time preparing for the zombie apocalypse)

It starts at the idyllicpoint-where movies normally end — a silhouette staring into the sunset, overlooking avast expanse of land. It is quiet. A squirrel scurries past, the grass crackles. Your horse snorts and kicks the ground.Through Red Dead Online, Rockstar offer usanother idyllic start at the beginning of the year — with an Honor Reset. Red Dead Redemption 2 (RDR2) is further validated by being crowned as Steam's Game of the Year 2020. I also had not uninstalled this ridiculously huge game from my PS4, and all these compelling factorsare reason enough to make RDR2 our first replay of this year.

Although I played RDR2 just after a run-through of the 'latest-gen' Assassins Creed Valhalla, the contrast was stark; like before and after you moisturise your feet in December. Valhalla was expansive without purpose. RDR2 focused on the details and peppered it with ample sunset photo opportunities. Perhaps this explains why I enjoyed allowing my horse to trot at a leisurely pace in the meadows of Valentine (RDR2), while stretching the steed's speed limits in the plains of Oxenfordshire (Valhalla), hating every bit of the mindless travel.

The details also explained why world exploration works in RDR2. It was driven by curiosity, and not because I wanted to check a viewpoint off the list and get a trophy outside the game. I wanted Arthur to make his little notes in his diary when he found something new. I wanted Arthur to reflect in the game the person I wanted him to be — the perfect 'honourable' outlaw. Valhalla also helped me realise why I do not skip cutscenes in RDR2 even a second time around. While the mystery missions in Valhalla were standalone stories (with a funny easter egg or two), the NPC interactions in RDR2 mattered more.

Will snake-bite man rob me? Will I meet the chap I saved from wolves in Strawberry when I visit next? In RDR2, I couldn't just wipe my hands off the robbery I just pulled off by throwing axes at the onlookers. It felt like there was life happening around Arthur, more than the random enemy spawns to which I was accustomed. The characters were discernible, they commanded attention during gameplay, your actions truly mattered.

While I lack the space here to wax eloquent, I've allocated enough in disc for photo moments in game. This game gets a whole 5 wanted stars out of a total rating of "they don't make games like this anymore".

GOING PLACES

The only art space from Bengaluru to participate in the India Art Fair, Galerie Sara Arakkal's founder gives us a peek into the works of the eight artists who are showcasing their creations at the virtual festival

EXPRESS FEATURES

This year's edition of the India Art Fair, which has been extended till March 20, might not have made much of a noise due to its virtual avatar, but it is still grabbing some amount of attention in the art world nevertheless. The festival, which sees a leading number of art galleries from the different parts country participate, also includes Galerie Sara Arakkal this time. It is the only art gallery from Bengaluru to participate.

Sara Arakkal, the founder of space, is a familiar face in the art circle. This time, she says, eight art works by Sara Hussain, Shirley Mathew, Kalidas B Sonar, among others, were sent in for the fair. "I have been a part of this festival since its inception, irrespective of where it has taken place," says Arakkal, who has been running the gallery since 1997. However, she believes that though the online platform is a boon, it is difficult to capture the attention of people. "When any show is online, there's only a limited footfall you can expect, and it includes mostly those from the same field," says Arakkal, adding that the point of these festivals is to introduce people to the world of art, but unfortunately at this point in time, the virtual way is the only option.

Since it's an online show, people take their time to verify the artist before making a purchase

- **Sara Arakkal, founder, Galerie Sara Arakkal**

Arakkal says that this route has helped reach a wider audience. "Though an online show has limitations because it is seen on the computer or phone screen, it has great advantages because the reach is global," says Arakkal, adding that she has got enquiries about some of the paintings on display, particularly those from Mathew's. Called Habitat, it is a monochromatic painting that speaks about the struggle of urbanisation in Bengaluru. Explaining the process of how paintings are sold at online shows, she says, "Unlike physical shows, the paintings are not sold immediately. Since it's online, people take their time to verify and cross-check the artist before making a purchase, which turns out to be a relatively long process."

Arakkal believes art is one of the first to be hit during an economic crash or a pandemic. "However, art is also one of the best means to overcome any crisis, because it is the most powerful tool to build our confidence and resurrect from the ash of bad times," she says.

India Art Festival can be viewed at indiaartfest.in, till March 20

This ongoing exhibition brings out works of art all the way from the City of Joy to namma ooru

EXPRESS FEATURES

Starting the year on a colourful note is MKF Museum of Art, which has an ongoing exhibition called Hues 21. It displays 25 pieces of work by young artists from Kolkata, which are all being displayed in namma Ooru. It will go on till Jan. 30. All the works were created during the lockdown, says Shirley Mathew, the museum's art consultant. "It's wonderful to see how their imaginations work even when they were in a closed environment," says Mathew. The artists whose works are displayed are trained at Swar Sangam, a non-profit organisation under the Birla Institution for Visual and Performing Arts in Kolkata.

Among all the works is a painting of a pumpkin slice, with some seeds fallen on the ground. It might look ordinary at first but the detailing makes it look like a photograph more than a painting. Speaking about more such works on display, Mathew talks about one piece where the artist has painted a lady from the Mughal times, complete with costume and jewellery from the era. For a twist, the woman is also holding onto a mask. In another painting, a worker is holding some buildings in a mortar pan on his head, which mostly seems to have been inspired from the migrant labour issue that the country was facing.

Mathew, an artist herself, considers her intentions behind the exhibition to not just bring in the beauty of art during this time but also to support these artists. So far, she is happy that the show has been getting a positive response from people. "Some artists, curators and art historians have seen my post on social media and they have been appreciative. Visitors too enjoyed viewing their works as all 25 are from Kolkata," says Mathew.

The art exhibition is on at MKF Museum of Art, Lavelle Road, till Jan. 30

It's a brand new year, which means lots of new games to look forward to. This is always an exciting time, but this year looks like it might just be phenomenal. Here's how.
PLAY ON
Arjun Sukumaran
PLAY LIST 2021

(Arjun is a gamer, book lover and an all-round renaissance man)

GhostWire: Tokyo

In the Tokyo of GhostWire, humans have largely vanished and the city's overrun by otherworldly spirits who don't appear particularly friendly. Using some sort of bonkers combination of martial arts and magic, you're trying to stay alive while figuring out what exactly is going on in your once-fair city. Although not quite at Death Stranding-levels of weirdness, there's enough crazy here to pique your interest.

Horizon: Forbidden West

Horizon: Zero Dawn was a game that I didn't expect to like anywhere near as much as I did. The very definition of 'more than the sum of its parts', Zero Dawn was a joy to play and its protagonist Aloy remains one of the best in recent years. Little wonder then that so many people are waiting eagerly to return to Horizon, which will happen sometime in late 2021.

Back 4 Blood

Left 4 Dead and its sequel are two of the best multiplayer games and it's a crime that we haven't gotten more. Well, we finally are — the developers behind the original game have split from Valve to make the not-at-all-official-sequel Back 4 Blood, coming in June.

Diablo IV

And, we come to Diablo IV — an entry that I will fully admit is here more out of hope than expectation. Blizzard has given us no indication that 2021 will be the year that we return to Sanctuary, but they've been known to pull an occasional rabbit out of their hat; and, after the year we've had, we could certainly use some more cheer. So here's hoping we find out more about Diablo IV sooner rather than later.

Deathloop

In Deathloop, you play as an assassin stuck in a time loop who must kill his targets before he runs out of time. Complicating matters is the fact that there's another assassin in there with you and she's after you. There's also a multiplayer mode where you can actually control that second assassin and try to mess with other players, which sounds like a pretext for some god-level griefing. Outer Wilds, one of my favourite games, proved that you can do some very interesting things with a time loop and so it'll be interesting to see Arkane Studios' take on the subject.

Far Cry 6

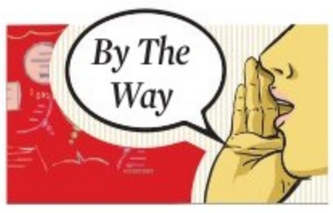
Ubisoft's other open-world series is getting another entry this year, and you'll be trying to overthrow the corrupt regime in charge of a Caribbean island. Fingers crossed that this will be a return to form for Far Cry; at the very least, it happens to star Giancarlo Esposito, fresh from his wonderfully villainous role in The Mandalorian, so it'll certainly be fun to watch.

God of War: Ragnarok

This is a tough one — we don't know if the sequel to 2018's wonderful God of War is coming this year. Heck, we don't even know for certain if it's called Ragnarok. Sony's certainly playing its cards close to its chest but, given the less than ideal circumstances around the launch of the PS5, they could certainly do with a change in the narrative and so we should be hearing more about this one fairly soon.

Gotham Knights

Developed by the studio behind Arkham Origins, Gotham Knights is set in a Gotham without Batman; so it's up to Robin, Nightwing, Batgirl and Red Hood to step into the void and go toe-to-toe with the city's criminal elements. Rocksteady brought Batman to life, and so it'll be interesting to see if these other characters will get a chance to shine now in the big B's absence.



For the love of fitness

Looks like someone is actually sticking to New Year goals. Actor Shubra Aiyappa kickstarted the weekend with a solid workout. Posting a video on Instagram, she shared, "And that's how I'm kick starting my weekend." #fitnessgoals

SMARTADS

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Will Tanya Hope be the new addition to *Bell Bottom 2* cast?

Tanya Hope

The Rishab Shetty-starrer, directed by Jayatheertha, which has retained most of the original cast and crew, is in the process of bringing on board a few more actors as part of the sequel

A SHARADHAA

THE launch of Rishab Shetty-starrer *Bell Bottom 2*, directed by Jayatheertha, is just around the corner, with makers of the sequel fixing the muhurath on January 29. The latest speculation is that Tanya Hope will be the new addition to this upcoming crime caper written by T K Dayanand. In a previous interview with *CE*, the director had mentioned that the second part will retain most of the original cast, which included Rishab, Haripriya, Achyuth Kumar, Yogaraj Bhat, and Pramod Shetty. Now, Tanya too is said to be joining the team which has raised the buzz around the film.

Tanya, popularly known as the Bassani *hudugi* of Sandalwood, is making her mark in other industries with interesting projects. The actor, who was part of Nagashekar's *Amar*— which was Abishek Ambareesh's debut— has worked in Tamil films like *Thadam* and *Dharala Prabhu*. With a foothold in Tollywood, she recently completed shooting for *Idhe Maa Katha*, directed by Guru Pawan, in which she shares screen space with Sumanth Ashwin, Meka Srikanth and Bhumi Chawla.

On the Kannada front, Tanya, who was last seen in *Khaki*, took some time to choose her next until *Bell Bottom 2* came by. The first part was released in 2019, marking the acting debut of Rishab. The role of Detective Diwakar played by the *Kirik Party* director was a successful hit at the box office, and the sequel is to be produced by Santhosh Kumar KC under the banner Golden Horse Cinema.

An official announcement about Tanya's inclusion is awaited from the crew, and more details about the film will be revealed around the muhurath, says our source. *Bell Bottom 2*, which is based in the retro period of the '80s, will have Ajaneesh B Lokanath scoring the music with DOP Arvind Kashyap handling the camerawork.

Rishab Shetty in a still from *Bell Bottom*

Kate Winslet says she felt bullied after *Titanic* success

CE FEATURES

ENGLISH actor Kate Winslet says she felt bullied after the global success of her 1997 release *Titanic*, because the film brought her personal life into scrutiny.

Winslet became a household name at the age of 21 after the success of the James Cameron film that cast her as Leonardo DiCaprio's romantic lead. Now, in the podcast WTF, the actor has spoken about the aftermath of her breakout role in her personal life.

"I went into self-protective mode right away (after *Titanic* came out)," Winslet said, adding: "It was like night and day from one day to the next. I was subject to a lot of personal physical scrutiny, I was criticised a lot and the British press were quite unkind to me."

"I felt bullied if I'm honest. I remember thinking, 'this is horrible and I hope it passes' -- it did definitely pass but it made me realise that, if that's what being famous was, I was not ready to be famous, definitely not," she shared.

At that time, instead of cashing on her newfound fame, she decided to hone her craft.

"I still felt like I wasn't really ready to do lots of big Hollywood jobs. It was a huge responsibility. I didn't want to make mistakes, I didn't want to blow it – I wanted to be in it for the long game. So I did strategically try and find smaller things, just so I could understand the craft a bit better and understand myself a bit better, and maintain some degree of privacy and dignity," Winslet said.

Winslet recently starred in the 19th century period drama *Ammonite*, as real-life paleontologist Mary Anning, who falls madly in love with a young woman (Saoirse Ronan).

Next offing from makers of *Ondu Motteya Kathe* will be *Raj Sounds and Lights*

The film, directed by Rahul Amin, is set against a wedding backdrop and stars Vineeth Kumar and Yasho Shivakumar in the leads; romantic drama made in Kannada and Tulu will have the creative guidance of actor and director, Raj B Shetty

CE FEATURES

POST the success of *Ondu Motteya Kathe*, production house Mango Pickles Entertainment is coming up with their next project. Titled *Raj Sounds and Lights*, this will be a romantic drama set against a wedding backdrop. The film, which is made in Kannada and Tulu, will bring back some of the cast and technical crew from the *Ondu Motteya Kathe* team. It will have Raj B Shetty as creative head, and will be directed by Rahul Amin, who has co-written the film's screenplay. As for the cast, Vineeth Kumar, who has written the film's story and screenplay will also be playing the protagonist. He has previously worked in *Ondu Motteya Kathe* and director MG Srinivas's *Birbal Trilogy*, and this will be his first full-fledged film as a lead hero. Yasho Shivakumar, who is currently working for Hariprasad Jayanna's *Padavi Poorva*, and Vijay Milton's *Shivappa* is playing the female lead along with the noted Tulu heroine, Karishma Amin. Naveen D Padil and Prakash Thuminad are also a part of the main cast.

The makers, who had shot the first schedule last October, have resumed shooting from January 10 with most of the filming taking place in the coastal belt of Karnataka. *Raj Sounds and Lights*, presented by Vaibhav Flix and Caru Entertainment, is produced by Anand N and will have music scored by Srajan Kumar Tonse. The film's stunt choreographed by Chethan D Souza will have two DOPs - Vishnu Prasad and Jacob Johnson. Interestingly, the film that is made in Kannada and Tulu, has a twist to the tale. While 70 per cent of the story in both the languages will be the same, the rest is said to run different tracks.

Vineeth Kumar

Yasho Shivakumar

It's a wrap for Vivek Agnihotri's movie, *The Kashmir Files*

CE FEATURES

SHOOTING for the forthcoming film, *The Kashmir Files*, has been wrapped up and the film is on course for a release later this year.

"And it's a wrap for #*TheKashmirFiles* Despite all odds. Thanks to the committed young team and wonderful actors," tweeted the film's director Vivek Agnihotri.

Anupam Kher, who features in the cast, also took to Twitter to inform that the shoot had ended.

"It is a WRAP for #*TheKashmirFiles*. Gut wrenching, sad & truthful experience. A true story that waited for 30 years to be told! Thank you @vivekagnihotri #PallaviJoshi for making this film. Thank you cast & the crew for your love & dedication. Jai Ho!! #Exodus #KashmiriPandits," Kher wrote.

The Kashmir Files, also starring Mithun Chakraborty, Pallavi Joshi, Puneet Issar and Arpan Tiwari, is scheduled to release later this year.

Last schedule of *Rashmi Rocket* in Bhuj

Taapsee Pannu

CE FEATURES

TAAPSEE Pannu is all set to start shooting in Bhuj, Gujarat, for the final schedule of her forthcoming film *Rashmi Rocket*.

Taapsee shared a photograph where she can be seen wearing a T-shirt, which has the word "Bhuj" written on the back. "Next stop....#LastSchedule, #RashmiRocket," informed the actor, captioning her photograph.

Taapsee recently concluded the Jharkhand schedule for the film.

POOJA HEGDE COMPLETES SHOOT FOR *RADHE SHYAM*

CE FEATURES

POOJA Hegde has wrapped up a schedule for her upcoming film *Radhe Shyam* starring Prabhas.

Pooja posted a picture on her Instagram Stories. In the image, the actress is looking at the camera as she is seen sitting on a backseat of a car.

"Schedule wrap on #RadheShyam after a long 30 day schedule... Now home for a fleeting second (airplane emoji)... Hyderabad -- Bombay (airplane emoji)," she wrote on the picture.

Prabhas will romance Pooja Hegde in the film.

Radhe Shyam is a period romantic-drama. The multi-lingual film is helmed by Radha Krishna Kumar, and will see a theatrical release in 2021.

Pooja Hegde